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ABSTRACT

This study (one portion of a larger study) was designed to describe the post-release experiences of former institutionalized students who received Elementary and Secondary Education Act Title I services. The sample consisted of approximately 200 students from eight correctional institutions. Data were collected through interviews with the students. The findings of the study addressed the issues of school reentry, employment success, subsequent offenses, and reinstitutionalization. Pre-release and post-release services the students had received and the impact of those services upon their success in readjusting to the community are also discussed. Tables of data are included and appended. (Author/MK)

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National Evaluation of Title I Programs in State Institutions for Neglected or Delinquent Youth

Post-Release Experiences of Students From State Correctional Institutions

Volume 3

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with
James L. Hoyt

April 1979

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Education Studies and Evaluation Department
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CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

Students confined in correctional institutions have been characterized as disadvantaged or handicapped in a number of ways. The enactment of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965--and its authorization for the expenditure of funds for students institutionalized in a correctional setting--recognized the educational handicaps of these students and identified a major objective of the Title I program to be an improvement in basic skills. Results from Phase I of the National Evaluation of Title I Programs for Neglected or Delinquent Youth in State Institutions, of which the present follow-up study is one part, revealed that teachers and administrators in correctional institutions reported a myriad of general problems (physical disabilities, emotional problems, and problems associated with transitions to community schools, jobs, and family life upon release) interacting with and confounded by student difficulties in acquiring basic and survival skills. Because of the reports of the numerous problems of institutionalized students during confinement, and following release, a recent report by the General Accounting Office (1977) questioned the appropriateness of the institutional use of Title I funds exclusively for academic educational services and called for a further consideration of the use of additional federal funds to provide transitional and post-release services for students leaving correctional institutions.

While Title I legislation does not prohibit the expenditure of funds for academically-relevant services, e.g., pre-release liaison services, counseling, providing eye glasses, the provision of these services has not been a systematic objective of Title I programs as they are now implemented in state institutions. Concern has been expressed by correctional personnel and various federal and state government agencies that the more ramified needs of institutionalized students be addressed in facilitating their transition from correctional institutions to the community. Educators and correctional personnel have long been aware of the re-entry difficulties experienced by youth returning to public schools from correctional institutions. The relatively inflexible schedules of public schools and their inability to meet the needs of students absent for a number of months, the often severe academic deficiencies of in-

stitutionalized students, the negative past school experiences of such students and the lack of student motivation seem to combine to severely limit continuation in school following release from institutions.

Despite the frequency with which correctional staff anticipate such problems for their students, little factual information about the incidence of these problems is available. Few institutions were found among the 40 sites participating in Phase II of the current evaluation that had any information on their students once they were released. This lack of information appears to be a joint function of physical distance from the communities to which students return, and the social distance resulting from the mutual insularity of communities and institutions.

In order to describe the experiences of students following release, to explore their needs, and to determine their rates of success in community adjustment and integration, the present follow-up study of post-release student experiences was conducted. The types of services currently available in institutions and in communities were also surveyed. From interviews with students, with respondents in institutions, and with respondents in community service agencies, the effectiveness of existing services was investigated. This study is one of four major substudies to be conducted as part of the total evaluation of Title I Programs for Neglected or Delinquent Youth in State Institutions. An overview of the objectives of the entire evaluation are presented in the following section.

CHAPTER II. OBJECTIVES OF THE OVERALL TITLE I N OR D EVALUATION

The evaluation of Title I programs in state institutions has several objectives. The first objective, accomplished during Phase I of the project, was to collect information about representative Title I programs in state institutions and to present descriptions of these programs. In order to gather this information, System Development Corporation (SDC) sent two-member teams of trained interviewers/observers into the field. These teams visited 100 randomly selected state institutions for neglected children, delinquent youth, or young adult offenders that receive Title I funds, and also interviewed state Title I administrators in each state. After spending several days at each institution recording and tabulating interview data and observations, field teams returned to SDC and wrote summary descriptions of the projects, the residents being served, and the nature of Title I services. These descriptions, together with the interviews and observational data from each site, will provide USOE and Title I personnel in the field with information about a representative sample of Title I programs in state institutions across the country.*

The second objective of the evaluation was to measure the impact of the Title I program upon the basic reading and mathematics skills and upon the attitudes of the participants, relating the attitudinal measures to change scores in achievement. Thirty randomly sampled and ten purposively selected institutions from the 100 that were visited during Phase I participated in this phase of the evaluation. Samples of students in the institutions were given achievement tests and functional literacy tests four times during the second year of the study. The data resulting from these test administrations were analyzed for changes in basic skills over time, and also to determine whether greater achievement gains were associated with particular types of program activities. Groups of students not participating in Title I programs were also tested, so that the performance of participants and non-participants could be compared.

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*Summaries of the Phase I report and the Phase II report may be obtained from the U.S. Office of Education.

The third objective of the evaluation was to develop evaluation models and reporting forms that can be used by institutions and state agencies for their annual evaluation report to the U.S Office of Education. SDC has reviewed the existing reports on Title I N or D program evaluations available at USOE. On the basis of this review, and the experience gained during the course of the evaluation, reporting models have been recommended to USOE to provide standardized information on program operations, including the degree of success in meeting Title I objectives. The ultimate goal of this model development activity is to simplify and standardize evaluation and reporting procedures so that federal, state and local program administrators can obtain comparable information on the Title I program and its nationwide impact.

The fourth objective has been to follow students who have been released from institutions so as to describe their post-release experiences in terms of school entry, employment success, subsequent offenses, and reinstitutionalization; to determine the pre-release and post-release services students have received; and to assess the impact of those services upon their success in readjusting to the community. The report of these findings is the subject of this volume. In the following section, the study objectives of the post-release follow-up study are outlined in more detail.

The fifth and final objective of the evaluation will be to provide for the dissemination of information about effective Title I projects. In the Substudy of Effective Practices currently underway, nine sites, identified on the basis of the Phase II impact evaluation as successful or unsuccessful with respect to basic skills instruction in reading and/or mathematics, have been selected for an in-depth observation of student characteristics, instructional program characteristics, and institutional characteristics. All students observed in basic skills classrooms are being administered pre- and post-tests on outcome measures utilized in the Phase II impact analysis. The product of this study will be a report providing information to correctional teachers, site administrators, and state correctional and educational administrators describing the interaction of student characteristics, educational program characteristics, and institutional characteristics that leads to improved student achievement.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY OF POST-RELEASE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

The follow-up study of post-release experiences of students released from Title I N or D institutions that is the subject of this report was designed (1) to describe the adjustment of students upon release and their degree of success in re-entering society; (2) to describe the types of pre-release, liaison, and post-release services that are provided to institutionalized students by correctional institutions and community agencies; and (3) to investigate the relationship of institutional activities, receipt of pre- and post-release services, and student attitudes and characteristics to post-release experiences in terms of school entry, employment, living arrangements, the commission of subsequent offenses and reinstitutionalization.

Each of these objectives subsumes other study issues. These issues include the following:

1) What is the nature of current pre-release services and institutional liaison activities that take place prior to release from correctional institutions? What kinds of services are available to those being released from correctional institutions?

   - What kinds of pre-release services are offered by institutions to facilitate student entry into schools, employment situations, and suitable living arrangements?
   - What kinds of communications occur among the institutions, probation and parole agencies, community resource agencies, and families in order to facilitate student re-entry to the community?
   - What kinds of community support or helping agencies provide services to those released from correctional institutions?
   - What are the patterns of communication and service delivery, if any, among helping agencies?

2) What are the post-release needs, experiences and difficulties of students after their release from correctional institutions?

- How many students enter school following release? Why do some fail to enter schools?
- How many releasees obtain jobs? What types of jobs are obtained, and how satisfied are releasees with their jobs?
- What are the students' living experiences with their families, foster homes, or group homes upon release from correctional institutions?
- How many releasees have further violations of the law after their release? In what types of illegal activities do they engage? How many releasees are reinstitutionalized?

3) What institutional activities, liaison services, student attitudes, or student characteristics are related to different patterns of adjustment after release?

- What student characteristics in terms of age, ethnicity, length of institutionalization, length of time since release, basic skills and functional achievement level, attitudes toward school and learning, self-concept, feelings of control, expectations for post-release success, and experiences of stigmatization are related to post-release adjustments in terms of school entry, employment, the commission of subsequent offenses, and reinstitutionalization?
- What types of institutional programs (e.g., job training, basic skills instruction, counseling services), pre-release services, liaison services, and post-release services are related to successful post-release adjustments? Are the experiences of students released under parole supervision different from the experiences of students released directly to the community?

- What are the post-release needs of students as assessed by institutional personnel, students, and community and parole agencies?

In order to seek answers to these questions, sites and students to be included in this study were selected to insure a representation of major dimensions. The selection procedures developed and the study design and methodology are described in Chapter IV. A complete discussion of study findings is presented in Chapters V through VII. In the following chapters, a summary of post-release study findings is presented.

CHAPTER III. SUMMARY OF POST-RELEASE STUDY FINDINGS

- Few students released from institutions were found to have completed high school or to have obtained a General Equivalency Diploma (GED). For these students, then, school entry is a desirable outcome.
- Approximately one-half of the students released from state correctional institutions were found to have entered school following their release from these institutions.
- The expected difficulties in school transition described by institutional staff during the course of the Title I evaluation were substantiated by released students. One-half of the students entering schools reported having difficulties in transferring to community schools. The most frequent source of difficulty was the fact that students perceived themselves to be performing at a level well below that expected of them by community schools.
- Further evidence of transitional difficulties consisted of the fact that 80 percent of those students returning to school dropped out prior to the completion of the school term. Reasons for dropping out generally centered on the difficulties encountered because of entry at mid-term, and the fact that students were not functioning at the level of their age- or grade-equivalent peers in public schools. It took those who entered school--and subsequently dropped out--a significantly longer period of time to enter schools after their release than it took those who completed the term.
- Released students have been characterized as lacking the motivation to enter schools. The decision to enter school upon release is frequently thought to be solely a function of the releasees' parole status and the fact that school attendance is often a condition of parole. Whether or not interviewed students enter school, however, was not found to be related to their status as parolees or as unsupervised releasees. Only 13 percent of released students (25 percent of non-attenders) expressed the thoroughgoing disinterest in school that is sometimes presumed to characterize the released student population.

- School entry upon release was best predicted by the age of the respondent: younger students were more likely to enter school after release. While this finding has generally been interpreted to imply a lack of motivation among older students, the failure to enter school was reported by respondents to be based on several factors, including an inability to gain acceptance into competitive trade schools, poor self-estimates as to performance abilities, and the inability to be successfully integrated into public school schedules at mid-term.

- A large percentage of those who did not attend school either unsuccessfully attempted to gain entry or, desiring attendance, found they experienced situations that prevented their entry (e.g., respondents had to work to support themselves, or felt they were too far behind their peers). Unsuccessful attempts to enter schools were significantly more likely among minority members.

- Reported achievement expectations of released students indicated widespread desires for continued schooling. Eighty-five percent of releasees (including those who failed to enter school and those who entered and dropped out) intended to achieve at least a high school diploma or G.E.D.

- Between 40 and 50 percent of released students were employed at the time of the follow-up reporting; such employment was generally in unskilled types of labor, and widespread job dissatisfaction was reported. Seventy-two percent of interviewed students had obtained employment at some point after their release, and almost all releasees had at least attempted to get a job.

- The ability to obtain employment was related to respondent age, perceived feelings of control, and level of basic skills performance.

- Respondents reported the major barrier to obtaining desirable jobs was the lack of experience. Only one-fourth of releasees had obtained any job training while they were confined, and only four respondents obtained jobs in areas in which they had been trained while they were confined.

- Three-fourths of releasees returned to parental homes in the community in which they had lived prior to their institutionalization. Others were placed in group homes or residential therapeutic programs.

- An estimated 30-40 percent of released students have further offense violations within the three-to-six month follow-up period. Recidivists were younger than were non-recidivists, perceived themselves as less in control of their lives, had histories of placements in non-parental homes, and were more likely to be directly released from correctional institutions without parole or aftercare supervision than were non-recidivists. Between 10-20 percent of released students were reinstitutionalized in either state or local institutions by the time of the follow-up reports.
- The rate of failure in terms of recidivism appears to be underestimated in previous follow-up studies focusing only on paroled releasees. Those released directly to the community without the receipt of parole supervision had a significantly higher rate of recidivism than did parolees.
- Thirty percent of the reinstitutionalized students' most serious offenses consisted of violations that are noncriminal in nature (e.g., status offenses, parole violations).
- One-half of reinstitutionalized students cited drug-related problems, alcohol-related problems, or problematic living situations as the source of their further problems with the law.
- Although school attendance was not related to recidivism, whether or not a job was obtained was related to the commission of subsequent offenses.
- Both institutional staff respondents and releasees themselves reported that few pre-release or liaison services are delivered by correctional institutions. The delivery of pre-release services within most institutions is generally contingent on student requests for assistance.
- In spite of the development in a few institutions of an integrated approach to post-release assistance responsive to the variety of resident needs, correctional institutions as a whole do not offer such services. Institutions for the most part have not overcome the barriers of physical distance from communities, the geographic dispersion of releases, and the lack of interaction with community agencies that impede service delivery to releasees.

- Parole agencies are the major providers of post-release and transitional services. The adequacy of parole services, however, is questionable since parolees reported infrequent interactions with parole officers, and expressed desires that their interactions be even less frequent.

CHAPTER IV. DESIGN OF THE STUDY OF POST-RELEASE STUDENT EXPERIENCES

SITE AND RESPONDENT SELECTION

Site Selection

Since only eight sites were to be included in the follow-up study, the population of institutions from which sites were selected was constrained to represent a narrower range of institutions than was represented in the Phase II impact evaluation. Institutions for the neglected, for example, tended to demonstrate release patterns and transitional services that are applicable only to that relatively small population of neglected or dependent youth. These institutions demonstrate a pattern of post-release service delivery that includes public welfare agencies and social service agencies rather than parole agencies, the latter of which are generally thought to serve as the focal point for post-release service delivery for delinquents. Consequently it was expected that releases from facilities for the neglected would describe the receipt of services on a frequency basis that could not be generalized to the delinquent institutional population.

In addition, institutions for the neglected are generally located within communities and utilize public schools for at least some of the educational needs of their students. The rate of success in school re-entry upon release from neglected institutions is thus likely to be higher for neglected than for delinquent students, since the rate may merely reflect a continuation in the schools that students had been attending while they were institutionalized. Since only two neglected sites were represented in the thirty random sites, these institutions were purged from the sampling frame.

Cost-benefit considerations for a site-level sample size of eight argued for the further elimination of sites that released few students over the four-month period that defined the study's respondent selection interval.

Sites releasing fewer than ten residents over the four-month period were thus eliminated from the sampling frame.

One issue to be addressed by this study was the relative merit of institutional (or other service agency) attempts to facilitate successful re-entry into the community. In order to enhance the likelihood that some sites providing pre-release services and some sites not providing many pre-release services would be selected, the 30 randomly selected sites participating in the Phase II impact evaluation were stratified on the basis of the presence or absence of pre-release or liaison activities. Information on which to base site stratification was obtained from the data collection team, which, as part of the on-site activities during their third visit of Phase II, prepared a short description of the procedures that the institution utilized in preparing students to return to the community. This information was obtained from informal discussions with administrators, educational and treatment staff, and residents.

It was additionally anticipated that post-release success in terms of school entry might well be related to the level of student achievement, since students having the ability to perform well on basic skills might demonstrate, for example, more success in entering schools. The average level of student achievement was utilized as the second variable for site stratification. This stratification procedure yielded eight sites providing pre-release services and housing higher performers, five sites providing pre-release services and housing lower performers, three sites providing few pre-release services and housing higher performers, and three sites providing few pre-release services and housing lower performers. The eight sites were then randomly selected from this stratified list of nineteen sites.

Student Respondent Selection

Another objective of the follow-up study was to estimate the rate at which residents released from correctional institutions experience success or failure on a number of outcome measures. To expand the sample size beyond the approximately 200 students who were expected to be released from the eight sites, and in order to obtain a broader representation of students re-

leased from correctional institutions than were represented by the eight sites alone, parole agents (or aftercare workers as they are sometimes called) from sites where students were not to be interviewed were asked to provide information on the school enrollment, employment success, living arrangements, offense recidivism and reinstitutionalization of students released under their supervision.

All students tested at the sites during the Phase II impact evaluation and released from the institution over the four-month period of December, 1977 to March 31, 1978 were identified as the sample of students to either participate in follow-up interviewing or to be reported on by their parole officers. These site and student selection procedures yielded exhaustive samples of releasees numbering 200 students from the eight institutions to be interviewed, and 584 students from 28 sites about whom data were to be collected from parole officers.

The definition of a four-month period during which respondents were released and thus eligible for selection was based on two considerations: (1) releasees selected had been present for at least one test administration during the Phase II evaluation so that some background information on releasees was available; and (2) students had to be released at least three months prior to the conduct of the interview in order to allow for a reasonable amount of time for adjustment to the community. Because of the continual entrance and exit of offenders from correctional institutions--which defined a different release date for each respondent--it was impossible to standardize the length-of-time since release for interview scheduling. Respondents interviewed had thus been released from institutions a minimum of three months and a maximum of seven months at the time of the interview.

Selection of Service Agencies

Directors of community service-oriented agencies providing services for the students being interviewed were respondents for the survey of community helping agencies. Because no known population of service agencies exists (and indeed, one of the objectives of this study was to identify those agencies providing

services to releasees from correctional institutions), it is impossible to clearly define the population of agencies that our respondents represent. The problem of defining the population of agencies, and of obtaining a description of post-release service delivery systems, is that the task is as difficult and as imprecise as the agencies themselves are fragmented and lack a systematic pattern of service delivery. In recent observations on the existence of community helping agencies that provide services to delinquents, it has been found that criminal justice personnel do not know what services are available even within their own community (Silberman, 1978; Cressey and McDermott, 1974; Vintner et al., 1975).

Since the objective of interviews with agency administrators was to describe the post-release services received by the follow-up sample of students, the identification of helping agency respondents was obtained from several sources. Representatives of parole agencies were interviewed in each city to which a student had been released, since parole agencies have previously been documented as the major providers of post-release services (Glaser, 1969). These representatives provided a list of agencies in each community that parolees commonly used in obtaining services. All releasees interviewed were additionally asked to provide the names of service agencies with whom they had interacted since their release from the institution.

Another problem in the identification and selection of helping agencies was that the geographic dispersion of releasees was wide. In many cases, no more than one or two students returned to the same community. The implication of this dispersion for the identification of service agencies and the interviewing of agency respondents was that the list of all agencies in every community to which students were returned might have been endless. Consequently, where the number of communities to which residents had been released from an institution was large, communities were randomly sampled for the conduct of agency interviews.*

*Communities were weighted for the number of returning residents. Thus, communities with a larger number of returning releasees had a higher probability of selection than did communities with fewer releasees.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Procedures used to collect data for the follow-up study differed depending on whether the institution was selected as one of the eight institutions from which the students were to be personally interviewed, or whether information about students was to be obtained from parole officers supervising the released student. From those institutions where parole officers were to provide post-release outcome measures, data collection procedures included the following:

- Students were identified who had been tested at least once during the impact evaluation but who had left the institution prior to March 31, 1978. This date allowed a minimum three-month period for community adjustment before reports of adjustment were obtained. Data collectors completed and returned a form to SDC that contained all student identification numbers assigned to each parole officer, as well as the name and address of the parole officer who would be requested to supply information on those students. This form was to be used for follow-up on nonresponses from parole officers.

- The form to be sent to parole officers was partially completed by the data collector. This form listed the student's name, study identification number, and birth date. It was designed so that each parole officer would receive a single form that would list all of the follow-up students assigned to his/her supervision. After they had provided needed information on the form, parole officers were instructed to remove all student names and to return only the student identification numbers and the data in stamped self-addressed envelopes.

- Forms were to be held at the institution awaiting our instructions to mail them on a date to be specified. This procedure was established to ensure that all institutions would mail the forms during the same time period over which interviews were to be conducted.*

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*Due to the unexpected changes in postage rates, forms were mailed about two weeks earlier than the beginning of the interviewing schedule. Thus, information received on the post-release experiences of students reported on by parole officers was based on a period of release that was on the average two weeks shorter than was the period of release for interviewed students.

For those institutions where interviews were to be conducted with the students, the following procedures were used:

- Each data collection team identified students who had been tested at least once, but who had left the institution before March 31, 1978. From institutional records the staff obtained the home addresses of students and, where extant, the area parole office or aftercare agency responsible for their supervision.
- One member of the data collection team was designated as the field coordinator for the follow-up studies. Forms completed on site, which contained names and addresses, were mailed directly from the institution to the residence of the field coordinator. Thus, at no time was SDC able to form linkages among student names, identification numbers, and data.
- The field coordinator was provided with a letter to send to each student to be interviewed, including a notice that the student would soon be contacted by phone to arrange for a personal interview. A postcard was included whereby the student could indicate a change of address or phone number. Students were informed that they would be paid ten dollars for the interview; they were additionally asked to call us collect* if they had questions.
- The field coordinator was responsible for providing the names, addresses, and identification numbers of students to the follow-up interviewers on site.
- Address corrections were requested from the post office for those letters undeliverable as initially addressed. Interviewers were updated daily on new addresses or phone numbers received.

Legality and Confidentiality Issues

The anonymity of juveniles committed to correctional institutions is in many states safeguarded by laws prohibiting the release of names of juveniles who

*Instructions were included that described how to make such a call.

have been arrested or who have been committed to a correctional institution The nature of these laws varies from state to state, as does the legal definition of "juveniles" (ranging from 15 to 19 years of age). Since a sizable proportion of students who were to be interviewed were juveniles, and since it was essential for follow-up purposes that these names be obtained, legal permission allowing the release of names was sought from each state in which the study was conducted. The procedure for obtaining this release varied almost on a state-by-state basis and generally required the consent of a legal representative of the state correctional agency, a representative of the state educational agency, or a Children's Court judge. Similar follow-up studies had been previously conducted in several states; thus the request was not an unusual one and few difficulties were encountered.

In order to obtain study approval for the institutions where parole officers were to provide post-release data, a letter from the study's project director was sent to each parole officer from whom information was to be requested. This letter included a copy of the study brochure describing overall evaluation objectives and a description of the post-release study objectives. The letter stressed that student names were to be removed from the form after it had been completed and before it was returned to SDC. In some states area parole officers requested that we obtain approval from state parole agencies who were responsible for approving the release of data.

To further safeguard the confidentiality rights of respondents, SDC limited the acquisition of post-release reports on students to reports from criminal justice-related personnel (e.g., parole officers), where the identity of respondents as parolees was already known. Neither school representatives nor employers were contacted in the evaluation of post-release adjustment in order to guard against the disclosure of student institutionalization records.

Interview Content

The focus of the semi-structured student interview schedule was a description of the experiences and problems students encountered after their release in terms of school, employment, living situations, parole experiences, recidivism and reinstitutionalization. Because of releasees' participation in Phase II testing, data on respondent background characteristics, length of institutionalization, measures of self attitudes, attitudes toward school and expectations for post-release success; and measures of basic skills performance were available for the relational analyses of these variables to post-release outcomes. Additionally, attitudinal measures were readministered to identify any changes in these attitudes that post-release experiences may have produced, and to assess the stability of attitudes over different situations and experiences.

Interviewer Training

A three-day training session was held to familiarize interviewers with the study objectives and the instruments to be used. Four of the five interviewers employed had collected data and administered tests to students during Phase II of the evaluation. The fifth interviewer was a teacher in a correctional institution who had extensive experience in interacting with students similar to respondents in this study.

Items on the semi-structured interview schedules were explained on an item-by-item basis. Interviewers were instructed to record as much information as possible so that the post-release adjustment of students could be adequately assessed. They were advised to establish an informal, conversational approach to data collection.

Procedures to be utilized in establishing the first crucial contact with students were explained. Because of the difficulties that might be encountered in obtaining respondent cooperation when the initial contact was to be by telephone, interviewers were provided with several approaches for conducting positive, nonthreatening conversations. As part of this training session, the initial phone calls to students to be interviewed were made.

Conduct of Student Interviews

Past follow-up studies reporting less-than-favorable response rates often question the methodological procedures employed since they may influence respondent cooperation. For this reason, the methodology employed in this study is described in some detail.

Students were provided with the opportunity to select the location for the interview so that a comfortable, non-threatening environment would be self-selected. Instructions to the interviewers directed them to be flexible about locations and to attempt to ensure student privacy and comfort with the choice of the location, with the additional caution that interviewer safety could be monitored. These procedures, of course, could not be realistically implemented where released students had been reinstitutionalized in a state or local detention facility at the time of the interview.

The most frequent problem encountered in the initial conduct of the interviews was in ensuring privacy for the interview. Many of the interviews were scheduled to take place in the home, and when data collectors arrived they often found other family members present. In these situations interviews were conducted outside the home. Since the weather in June and July allowed for the use of the outdoors, this solution was frequently utilized.

Interviewers emphasized the importance of each respondent's contribution to the study, which reportedly fostered a feeling of self-importance among respondents. Interviewers frequently reported that respondents expressed disbelief that anyone would travel from another state to talk to them.

Conduct of Service Agency Interviews

In each area where students were released, an attempt was made to obtain information from all agencies that students indicated had provided post-release services and agencies most often used by parole agencies in referring parolees for services. Additionally, all directors of parole agencies in each area

were interviewed. Community service agency directors were identified and contacted. Because of the easy access to the helping-agency directors by phone, and because these interviews could be scheduled during times that students were unavailable for interviews, service agency data was gathered at little additional cost to the study.

RESPONSE RATES OBTAINED

In previous post-release follow-up studies, newly released residents of correctional institutions have demonstrated a high rate of mobility during the first year after release. This mobility presents logistical problems for post-release studies because of the tremendous difficulties in tracking releasees. Gaining the intended respondent's cooperation is a problem above and beyond the problem of locating respondents. Of the exhaustive sample of 195 students from the eight institutions to be interviewed, 175 were contacted and 174 were interviewed for a 90 percent response rate. Thus, we have been able to overcome many of the usual problems accompanying less than desirable response rates. The high response rate enhances the likelihood that respondents interviewed are representative of the population released from institutions within a four-month time period. Aside from the one nonresponse due to respondent refusal, all incompleted interviews resulted from staff inability to locate respondents. Thus, completed interviews do not merely reflect the more easily located and cooperative releasees that are thought to be reflected in studies where lower response rates and non-cooperation are reported.

The favorable response rate was probably due to several factors. All interviewers made repeated attempts to contact the students by phone; if that method failed, they either sent a mailgram or visited the address itself to attempt to make contact or locate the student. Attempted contacts ranged from one attempt to 44 attempts, and averaged five attempts per interview completion. An adequate amount of time was allowed in each state so that interviewers could exhaust all possible tracking procedures. Additionally, the payment for interviews generally appeared to be a motivation for respondents to participate once they had been located.

Response rates from parole officers and aftercare workers who reported on non-interviewed releasees were somewhat lower than interview response rates, but were still impressive considering the geographic dispersion of released inmates and the large number of parole agencies contacted. Of 590 students released from institutions over the four-month period, data were returned by parole officers on 437 students. This 74 percent response rate was accumulated on the basis of reports from 178 parole officers and aftercare workers; thus each parole agency and aftercare respondent reported on only two to three released residents.* It should be noted that although parole officers were generally reported to be knowledgeable of further law violations for parolees, a lack of knowledge was often reported for outcomes such as school entry, employment success, or living situations obtained.

REPRESENTATIVENESS OF FOLLOW-UP SAMPLES

The similarity of background characteristics of students interviewed and those reported on by others is of special interest because of different group composition based on whether students were released on parole or whether students were straight releasees from the institutions. Unlike the students reported on by parole officers (who were all released on parole), students interviewed represented the population of releasees that included both parolees and those released directly from institutions. While it may be argued that the inclusion of directly released students in the interviewed sample rendered the two samples noncomparable on a critical dimension, the decision to include these students was in response to criticisms that previous follow-up studies have only assessed releasees' adjustment to parole rather than adjustment to communities (Lipton et al., 1975). The expectation is that the rate of failure on important outcome measures may be underestimated for those who do not receive parole supervision.

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*No data was received on any students from four of the sites in the original Phase II sample due to (1) institutional policies of straight releasees (where inmates are not released on parole and thereby lack respondents to provide follow-up data); and (2) the reluctance of one site to participate due to ongoing litigation.

In order to ascertain the representativeness of both samples--those interviewed and those reported upon--average values on background characteristics and attitudinal measures for both samples were compared to average values for the entire Phase II sample that had been selected to represent the institutional student population nationwide (see Table A-1 in Appendix). These comparisons assess the comparability of a sample of parolees to a sample composed of parolees and direct releases. In a later section, parolees and direct releases among the interviewed sample will be compared to determine whether different patterns of post-release adjustment occur.

Students interviewed after their release from institutions, and those reported on by parole officers, were similar to the general institutional population in terms of age and grade placement. Since the sample of students interviewed and those students reported on by parole officers represent the population of students released from correctional institutions over a four-month span of time, they would be expected to differ from the general institutional population on several dimensions; in particular, these samples would be comprised of students for whom the length of institutional confinement is likely to be shorter than the length of stay for the more general population. This expectation was borne out by data presented in Table A-1 of the Appendix. Both samples of releases had anticipated significantly shorter lengths of stay than did the general population at the time of Phase II testing, and interviewed students anticipated even shorter lengths of stay than did releasees on whom parole officers reported.

Those released from correctional institutions over a relatively short length of time (constrained as the four-month period of December, 1977 to March, 1978) differed from the general institutional population in other respects. Minority residents, for example, are under-representated, as are offenders institutionalized for the more serious person-related offenses, which is usually correlated with length of confinement. Females are not represented in the sample of students interviewed. Since institutions tend to house either all male or all female populations (and since relatively few all-female institutions were represented

in the Phase II sample), it is not surprising that the random selection of only eight sites would not include an institution housing females.

Releasees tended to be better performers in terms of reading and math skills than were their counterparts in the general institutional student population. Furthermore, institutions selected for the follow-up study demonstrated significantly higher average levels of basic skills performance than did institutions that were not selected.

Both samples of releasees were very similar to the general population in terms of self-attitudes (e.g., self-esteem, locus of control, and sociability) and school-related attitudes (e.g., liking of school, school involvement, basic skills attitudes). The conclusion drawn from these sample comparisons is that both samples appear to be similar to the institutional student population on a number of important dimensions. However, where generalizations to the population are made on the basis of post-release experiences reported by follow-up students or their parole officers, caution must be exercised in interpreting the influence of variables on which samples differed significantly (e.g., the impact of length of confinement and ethnicity on post-release experiences).

ASSESSING POST-RELEASE ADJUSTMENT

Whenever "post-release adjustment" is utilized as an outcome variable on a number of dimensions such as school entry, job success, living arrangements and recidivism, a problem of interpretation presents itself for which there is no easy solution: differences in reports of adjustments are perhaps as likely to be determined by variations in legal definitions of crime or by community variations in economic conditions as they are to be determined by individual abilities or programmatic attempts to facilitate these adjustments. Economic conditions and labor markets, for example, vary from one community to another so that the ability to obtain a job might be expected to be relatively independent of personal background characteristics, motivation, or agency attempts at job placement.

Students participating in a follow-up study are likely to demonstrate a wide range of characteristics, some of which emanate from variations such as the definition of offenses, of juvenile or adult legal status, of dependency or emancipation (e.g., the legal right to live as an adult rather than be placed in foster care), and of compulsory school attendance. These legal or societal constraints define the varying range of permissible activities for youth and may influence the extent to which positive or negative post-institutional adjustment is defined. A major difference between juveniles and adults, for example, is that for juveniles age and dependency are criteria for involvement with the juvenile justice system (factors beyond their control), while for adults the conviction for an unlawful act is the sole condition for contact with the criminal justice system. Differential criteria in assessing post-institutional adjustment might thus be employed. The acquisition of a job may indicate less about the adjustment of a juvenile offender expected to return to school than about an adult offender who is expected to demonstrate responsible behavior, self-sufficiency, and attitudes respectful of job importance and the need to lead a law-abiding life.

CHAPTER V. WHAT ARE THE POST-RELEASE EXPERIENCES OF INSTITUTIONALIZED STUDENTS?

The post-release experiences of interviewed students, and students reported on by parole officers, were assessed on several measures of adjustment, including school entry, employment, living situations, recidivism and reinstitutionalization. The experiences of students on each of these adjustment measures are described separately in the following pages. Paroled students, and those released directly to the community, are compared in order to assess differences in the background characteristics and the post-release experiences of these samples of respondents. The findings on the interrelationships of adjustment measures are then presented.

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

Educators and correctional personnel have long been aware of the entry difficulties experienced by youth who return to public schools from correctional institutions. Negative past student experiences with public schools, poor basic skills, a lack of motivation, and problematic living situations are thought to combine to prevent students from entering schools after their release from institutions. The actual rates at which students return to schools upon release, however, are largely unknown. A previous estimate of both local and state neglected and delinquent institutions estimated a 68 percent rate of return to schools (General Accounting Office, 1977). This return rate is expected to be misleadingly high for institutionalized youth in general, because the national population of neglected and younger youth (who generally are bound by compulsory attendance laws) was overrepresented in the sample reported upon in that study.

In our sample of students interviewed at least three months after release, one-half of the interviewed students had returned to some type of school upon their release (see Table V-1). This rate compares to a 40 percent return rate among students for whom reports were obtained from parole officers. For those who returned to school, there was little time delay in school entry, since the average period of transition from institutional to community school attendance was two weeks. Although the maximum length of time before school entry was five months, few students actually experienced such delays.

Table V-1. School Entry Rates, Types of Schools Attended, and Reasons Cited for Failure to Enter Schools

	Students Interviewed (N=174)		Parole Reports (N=267)	
Students Entering Schools:				
Entered public high schools	28%		37%	
Entered vocational/technical schools	5		3	
Entered alternative schools (e.g., work/study, GED preparation)	16	51%	0	41%
Entered college	2		1	
Students Not Entering Schools:				
Plans future attendance	37		14	
No plans to attend	12	49%	35	59%
Intentions unknown	0		10	
Reasons Cited for Failure to Enter Schools				
Attempted unsuccessfully to enter (e.g., vocational schools too competitive)	18%			
Desired school but didn't attempt entry (e.g., had to work)	22			
No desire for school but due to factors beyond control (e.g., too far behind peers)	34			
No desire to ever attend	26			
	(85)			

About one-half of all returning students were re-enrolled in schools they had attended prior to their institutionalization; re-enrollment in the same school generally reflected the fact that the school was the only one in the geographic area. Over half of the students returning to school enrolled in regular public high schools; only 10 percent actually enrolled in vocational/technical schools, despite the frequent desires for vocational training. As many as one-third of released students attended specially-designed alternative schools that take into consideration the motivational differences, emotional needs, and remedial needs of students with a history of institutionalized confinement (e.g., work-study programs, G.E.D. preparation, adult basic education).

One expected source of transitional difficulty for released offenders that has been discussed frequently and at great length is stigmatization. The extent to which important others are knowledgeable of an offender's institutional experiences, and the degree to which they contribute to his stigmatization, have been hypothesized as major factors in the released offenders' subsequent success or failure (Becker, 1968; Schur, 1971; Goffman, 1963; Lemert, 1974; Dinitz, Dynes and Clarke, 1969). Student respondents indicated that key staff members in school settings do indeed know of the students' past confinement record: more than three-fourths of students reported that principals, counselors, teachers and other students had knowledge of the institutional experience. However, few students reported encountering any problems as a result of this knowledge.

The perception of correctional educators that student transition from institutional to public schools is problematic was substantiated by respondents who returned to schools. One-half of the students returning to school reported that they had problems in making the transition: the most frequently cited source of difficulty was the fact that releasees from correctional institutions perform at a level well below the level expected of such students.* That these students with poor basic skills also experience the interruption of instruction

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* The Phase II impact evaluation demonstrated that residents of state correctional institutions who are on the average 17 years of age perform at a fifth-grade level.

upon their commitment to correctional institutions, and again upon their return to community schools, could present insurmountable educational programming difficulties. While state institutions design educational programs on the expectation of continual entry and exit of students, and on the expectation of the need for remedial basic skills instruction--and hence were found to provide a highly individualized education program (Keesling et al., 1979)--public schools are generally not designed with such flexibility. Even students functioning essentially at grade level might be expected to experience difficulties in rejoining instructional groups at mid-term. For the remedial institutional population, then, there is little likelihood that they will experience success upon their entry into public schools after release. This expectation was borne out for a sizable proportion of students entering schools upon release who negatively evaluated their public school performance. While most students evaluated their own school performance favorably, one-third of the students continued to experience failure in their school setting, and rated their performance as "poor" or "very poor". Poor performers cited the fact that they were behind their peers, together with poor motivation and poor attitudes toward school, as reasons for their poor performance. Further evidence of widespread school transitional difficulties was the fact that most students who had entered schools after their release had stopped attending. Eighty percent of students returning to school upon release had withdrawn from school prior to the end of the school term.

The examination of differences in individual motivation, background characteristics, attitudes, and situational constraints experienced by those who enroll in school upon release, and those who fail to enroll, is critical in terms of identifying release needs and the planning for means to reduce those needs. Therefore, comparisons were made of (1) those who entered school upon release and those who didn't, (2) those who entered school after release but soon dropped out versus those who remained, and (3) those who attempted unsuccessfully to gain entry to schools--or at least desired entry--and those who had no desire and made no attempt to enter school.

Students released from correctional institutions who enrolled in schools upon their release were first compared to releasees who did not enroll in school. Compari-

sons were made on a number of dimensions, including background characteristics, measures of self-attitudes and school-related attitudes, levels of basic skills performance,* and the receipt of pre-release, liaison, or post-release services. It was hypothesized that students would be more likely to enroll in schools upon their release if they had demonstrated higher levels of basic skills performance while confined, if their grade placement corresponded more closely to their chronological age, if they had more positive self-attitudes and attitudes toward school and learning, and if they received assistance in the transition from institutional to public schools. None of these hypothesized relationships was supported among the sample of students interviewed.

Regardless of the measure utilized in assessing the level of basic skills performance (e.g., domain-referenced tests of basic skills, standardized achievement tests, or functional literacy tests), no relationship was demonstrated between level of performance and school entry upon release (see Table V-2). Since both level of basic skills performance and school entry were related to age, the influence of age was partialled out from the relationship of performance level and school entry. Still, no relationship was revealed. Better performers on basic skills are not more likely to enter school after release, regardless of their age.

While the receipt of Title I basic skills instruction during confinement appeared related to school entry, an examination of this correlation (controlling for age) indicated that the relationship is explained by the younger age of Title I participants. The likelihood of enrolling in school was primarily a function of age: the younger the student, the greater the likelihood of a return to school ($r = -.48$ for interviewees; $r = -.29$ for parole officer reports). This finding should not be surprising given the fact that students below the age limitation of compulsory attendance attend school by virtue of legal statute as well as by virtue of any motivational aspects.

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* Measures on background characteristics, attitudes toward self and school, and level of basic skills performance were obtained from Phase II test data.

Table V-2. Pearson Correlations of Post-Release Outcomes with Student Background Characteristics, Level of Achievement, Student Attitudes, and Time Since Release

	SCHOOL ENTRY (1=Yes; 0=No)		JOB SUCCESS (1=Yes; 0=No)	
	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports
Age	-48 (165) S=.001	-.29 (230) S=.001	.31 (171) S=.001	.37 (228) S=.001
Ethnicity*	-.11 (162) n.s.	.06 (231) n.s.	.16 (167) S=.01	.17 (215) S=.01
Sex**	**	.03 (233) n.s.	**	.01 (231) n.s.
Offense For Which Institutionalized (Least to Most Serious)	.09 (100) n.s.	-.10 (199) n.s.	.22 (161) S=.01	-.05 (199) n.s.
Length of Time Institutionalized	-.11 (69) n.s.	-.06 (177) n.s.	.05 (67) n.s.	-.09 (178) n.s.
Level of Math Achievement	-.01 (127) n.s.	.01 (267) n.s.	-.02 (127) n.s.	.20 (250) S=.001
Level of Reading Achievement	.09 (127) n.s.	-.02 (240) n.s.	.00 (127) n.s.	.26 (238) S=.001
Liking of School	.09 (111) n.s.	.05 (222) n.s.	-.08 (114) n.s.	.20 (221) S=.01
Self-Esteem	.01 (169) n.s.	-.04 (209) n.s.	.06 (174) n.s.	.08 (207) n.s.
Locus of Control	-.09 (168) n.s.	-.01 (208) n.s.	.01 (173) n.s.	.22 (206) S=.001
Length of Time Since Release	.05 (165) n.s.	.01 (265) n.s.	.08 (165) n.s.	.09 (247) n.s.

*Ethnicity was scored "1" for non-minority respondents, "2" for minority respondents.

**Females were scored "1", males were scored "2". Too few females were represented in the interviewed sample to report.

Post-release experiences and background characteristics of students who entered school and dropped out prior to the completion of the school term were then compared to those who entered school and remained in school. Dropouts differed from those who remained in school only in the respect that it had taken students who subsequently quit school longer to gain entry into school after their release: three weeks versus one week (a difference significant at the .01 level). Dropouts had not, however, entered later in the term on the average than did those who remained in school. Thus, the failure to finish the school term was not a function of a later release date for subsequent dropouts.

Although no significant differences in level of tested basic skills performance were obtained between students who completed the school term and those who dropped out, students who dropped out perceived of themselves as poor performers. Forty percent of those who quit school rated their performance as "poor", as compared to 16 percent of those who remained in school. Thus, while students who dropped out of community schools performed as well on tests of basic skills as the general institutional population, and as well as those who actually completed the school term after their release, perceptions of their performance were negative when they entered community schools.

Almost all students who were enrolled in vocational/technical schools, and half of those enrolled in regular schools, had quit prior to the end of the term. Almost all students who had withdrawn from school reported their intentions of returning in the fall school term. Most dropouts intended to return to regular public schools, although a sizable 30 percent hoped to enter vocational/technical schools.

Of those students who did not enter school, 18 percent reported they had attempted to get back into public schools or vocational/technical schools, but that they were unsuccessful due to factors outside their control (they were barred from enrolling, trade school acceptance was highly competitive, etc.). Almost one-fourth of non-attendees reported that they had wanted to attend school upon their release but had never attempted to enroll, citing their perceived inability to gain acceptance into desired trade schools, the need to work, etc., as the reasons for

their failure to seek enrollment. The remaining 60 percent of releasees who did not return to school cited their lack of motivation and dislike for school as the reason for non-attendance: for 34 percent this lack of desire was based on perceived personal inabilities (e.g., "I couldn't catch up", "I have learned all I can", "competition is too tough"). The remaining respondents merely stated their preference for working over school attendance (see Table V-J). Thus only 25 percent of non-attendees (13 percent of the released student population) expressed the definitive lack of interest in school that is often thought to characterize the majority of the released student population.

A final comparison was made of those releasees who either attempted unsuccessfully to gain entry to schools--or at least desired entry--and those who had no desire and made no attempt to enter school. Because a relatively small number of students interviewed had unsuccessfully attempted entry or manifested unfulfilled desires to attend school, it was not anticipated that significant differences would be found. However, significant differences were found on the background characteristics of age and ethnicity. Older respondents more frequently expressed no desires for additional schooling, and minority members were more likely to report unsuccessful attempts or non-realized desires to enter schools than were non-minority respondents.

In order to assess student perceptions of the positive aspects of institutional education programs and its impact on their transition to the community, students were asked to provide retrospective evaluations of their institutional school experiences. Sixty-five percent reported a helpful experience in the respect that their basic skills and survival skills improved, and that greater self-confidence and motivation resulted from the school experiences. These respondents, however, acknowledged that in spite of such improvements, they did not have enough instructional exposure to gain competency in basic skills or to qualify for a GED. The 35 percent who found institutional schooling unhelpful claimed they didn't learn anything and that the instruction offered by institutions was below their own level of ability.

Although the average age of post-release follow-up students was seventeen years--which made them at least chronologically near equals to public school graduates--80 percent of both the interviewed releasees, and the releasees reported upon by parole officers, had no diploma or General Equivalency Diploma (GED). In fact, institutional schooling had provided this credential for only 13 percent of those released from correctional institutions. Interviewed students expressed desires for such a degree: 40 percent intended to complete high school, 25 percent intended to acquire a GED, and 20 percent hoped to acquire a trade-school certificate.

Pre-release assistance in gaining entry into school was at a low level. Only one-fourth of respondents reported assistance from either institutional personnel, community agents, or parole officers in entering school. For one-half of those receiving pre-release services, the service consisted simply of encouragement; others reported receiving actual assistance in handling administrative details in making the transition. This finding supports recent conclusions (GAO, 1977) that institutions assume few responsibilities in assisting youths in their transition from correctional institutions to schools in the community. Post-release services were similarly reported at a low level of delivery (30%). No students from the two adult institutions received post-release services. The receipt of either pre- or post-release services was reported by 43 percent of respondents; 7 percent of respondents received both pre- and post-release services in making transitions to non-institutional schools. As would be expected, those who received pre- or post-release assistance were more likely to enter school (see Table V-3). Controlling for age did not change the magnitude of this relationship. In general, parole agencies continue to be the major providers of post-release school transition service to students (Glaser, 1969).

The findings on the post-release educational experiences of students are suggestive of targets of concern. Those who might be of immediate concern, for example, are the 75 percent of the non-attendees who cited personal inabilities or situational constraints as reasons for their failure to attend school, and those students who entered school after release but subsequently dropped out.

Table V-3. Pearson Correlations of Post-Release Outcomes with Receipt of Post-Release Services and the Intercorrelation of Outcomes

	SCHOOL ENTRY (1=Yes; 0=No)		JOB SUCCESS (1=Yes; 0=No)		RECIDIVISM (1=Yes; 0=No)		REINSTITUTIONALIZATION (1=Yes; 0=No)	
	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports
Reinstitutionalization	-.06 (169) n.s.	-.12 (267) S=.05	-.11 (169) n.s.	-.22 (249) S=.001				
Recidivism	.12 (169) n.s.	-.05 (267) n.s.	-.08 (174) n.s.	-.32 (249) S=.001				
Job Success	-.41 (164) S=.001	-.13 (241) S=.05						
Receipt of School Liaison Services	.21 (169) S=.01				.01 (174) n.s.		.01 (174) n.s.	
Receipt of Job Assistance	.02 (169) n.s.		-.02 (169) n.s.		.04 (174) n.s.		.02 (174) n.s.	
Receipt of Counseling Service	.02 (169) S=.05		-.002 (169) n.s.		.05 (174) n.s.		.06 (174) n.s.	
Parole Supervision vs. Straight Release	.03 (169) n.s.		.12 (165) n.s.		-.15 (170) S=.05		.10 (170) n.s.	

For those releasees, services could be offered that would build on existing motivations (e.g., stated intentions of entering school) and provide opportunities to overcome fatalistic expectations of never being able to catch up academically with one's peers.

For the one-fourth of respondents who did not return to school and who unambiguously cited personal preferences for working rather than school attendance, service delivery could possibly be more difficult. However, even the statement of negative attitudes regarding school entry should not be taken at face value; to do so assumes that nothing could change these preferences. If negative attitudes toward school are based on the fact that these respondents have had no positive educational experiences in institutional settings or elsewhere, then the "choice" to discontinue schooling may not be a real choice, since it is made without alternatives.

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES

Interviewed students reported a fairly high degree of success in obtaining employment upon their release. Seventy-two percent of interviewed students reported having obtained employment at some point following their release. The large percentage of releasees reporting immediate employment is not surprising considering that employment is often a condition of release (General Accounting Office, 1975; Glaser, 1969). Respondents reported having gained employment in an average of five weeks after release. Almost one-half of those employed obtained jobs as early as two weeks after their release, but 25 percent did not obtain jobs until two months or longer after release.

While the 72 percent rate may be indicative of the motivation and capability of released students to obtain some type of employment, it is not a good indicator of the level of employment at a given point in time. Seventy percent of the interviewees who obtained jobs reported that they were no longer working at the job they initially obtained at the time of the interview. Only slightly over one-half of these initially employed respondents were re-employed at the time of the interview. Thus only forty-seven percent of interview respondents were

employed at the time of the interview. This rate is roughly comparable to the forty percent rate of employment reported by parole officers for parolees.

The types of employment obtained by those released from institutions consisted of unskilled or semi-skilled types of labor, such as waiters, busboys, maintenance, construction assistants, service station attendants, etc. In similar findings of types of jobs obtained by releasees, Glaser found a practice of releasees initially taking clearly unsatisfactory jobs to fulfill parole obligations, with the intention of changing jobs for more favorable employment at the first opportunity. Job turnover, therefore, would not necessarily be an indicator of poor adjustment. Considering the age of the respondents, jobs obtained by this group of ex-offenders are probably not unlike the types of employment obtained by their non-offender counterparts. The important issue in the long run, however, is whether this group is more likely to remain indefinitely in these categories of employment by virtue of their inability to enter trade schools or to complete high school diploma requirements.

Employed releasees' perceptions of job performance was on the whole much more positive than were enrolled releasees' perceptions of their school performance: 95 percent of respondents reported highly favorable levels of performance. While perceived job performance was high, job satisfaction was less favorable: forty percent reported job dissatisfaction. The major sources of this dissatisfaction included poor salaries and undesirable types of work. This dissatisfaction was further verified by the fact that 70 percent of respondents were not working at their first job at the time of the interview and cited job dissatisfaction as the reason for quitting. Only slightly over half of those who quit their first job were re-employed, and these had moved almost immediately into their new jobs. Within the three-to-seven month follow-up period, only 12 percent of respondents reported changing jobs more than twice. Despite these job changes attributed to the finding of more favorable jobs or job conditions, one-third of respondents continued to experience dissatisfaction with their new jobs.

Past research findings have demonstrated little agreement on the extent to which providing employers with knowledge of institutional records results in positive or negative consequences (Glaser, 1969). For the students interviewed, employer or fellow employees' knowledge of the respondent's institutional history was much less frequent than was the case for school officials. Only half of the workers reported that their employers were aware of their institutional records. Few problems were reported as a result of this knowledge; however, respondents generally indicated that such information was kept from those employers for whom they thought such a record would be problematic.

Newly released offenders place a high premium on obtaining a job. While three-fourths of interviewed students had actually obtained jobs, most of those remaining had at least attempted to get a job. Many of those who were unsuccessful in obtaining employment attributed their failure to age requirements. Thus, older offenders who are presumably more in need of employment were successful in obtaining it. One-fourth of those unsuccessful in obtaining employment reported that nonsuccess was due to high unemployment rates in their cities.

Releasees who were successful in obtaining employment were compared to those who were unsuccessful and were found to differ significantly in terms of age, level of basic skills performance, and feelings of control. Thus older releasees, those with better basic skills, and those who perceived more self-control in their lives (and presumably acted on this control in seeking employment) were more likely to obtain jobs. The relationship of job success and basic skills performance was slightly weakened when age was controlled. All other relationships to jobs success reported in Table V-2, (e.g., offense status, grade placement, etc.) disappeared when age was controlled.

Pre-release assistance in obtaining jobs was even more scarce than assistance in entering school. Only 15 percent of respondents reported such assistance, most of which came from friends and relatives. Several respondents (including all releasees from one site) reported having experienced a double bind whereby their impending release date was dependent on their ability to obtain a job, and their ability to obtain a job was dependent upon a firm release date. Post-

release job assistance, however, was more available: half of the respondents received such assistance. Thus, 60 percent of releasees received either pre- or post-release assistance; 7 percent received both. These services were either received from friends and relatives, community counselors, or parole agents, all of whom were identified as having found jobs for respondents, or having provided information that led to a job. Unlike the more negative reports on the usefulness of pre- and post-release school assistance, respondents were highly favorable with regard to job assistance, perhaps because the benefits of such assistance, unlike the benefits of school attendance, are more immediate.

Since few respondents received pre-release assistance in obtaining a job, and because only one-fourth of respondents received job training while confined, the relationship of institutional treatment in terms of job training and of pre-release job assistance to employment success was impossible to assess fairly. Job training obtained in institutions consisted primarily of welding, auto mechanics, mining, and printing. That only four respondents obtained jobs in areas in which they had been trained indicates that institutional job training adds little to the post-release adjustment of offenders, at least in terms of job success. The most frequent complaint of over one-third of those receiving some type of job training while they were confined was that without more exposure to training and job experience, the training they were receiving in institutions was more-or-less useless. Other criticisms were that institutions needed more vocational program offerings, that the programs must update their equipment and techniques to be compatible with skills required on the job market, and that program offerings bear a closer relationship to skills needed on the job market. These findings amplify previous findings that the major barrier to job success is not past criminal or institutional records, but the lack of work experiences (Glaser, 1969; Pownall, 1969; Toborg et al., 1978).

Despite the finding of a relationship between job success and level of basic skills performance (as measured while respondents were confined), almost three-fourths of respondents perceived no relationship between the institutional academic program and their ability to obtain or keep a job. Those who reported

that their academic education was helpful in obtaining employment cited improved basic skills and the attainment of a General Equivalency Diploma as the sources of help. Many respondents tended to believe either that there was nothing institutions could do to improve their adjustment in terms of employment upon release, or they had no idea of what could be done for them. Of the 50 percent who offered suggestions for improvement, most felt that the addition of more vocational courses, more exposure to job training while confined, and the teaching of job-finding skills would markedly improve their situation in finding employment upon release.

In response to most questions asked of respondents about the types of pre- and post-release assistance that would be helpful upon release, respondents were either noncommittal or lacked opinions. They were highly opinionated, however, with regard to desires for employment assistance. Over one-half of respondents believed that some type of person or agency knowledgeable in the job market was essential in securing a job. Other frequently requested assistance included the teaching of job-seeking skills, the establishment of a source for providing personal references, and placement in schools or work experiences that provide more job training.

For the 60 percent who received it, job assistance bore no relationship to employment success (see Table V-3). Those who received either pre- or post-release services were no more likely to obtain employment than were those who received no such assistance. While it is obvious that knowledge of the job market and employment opportunities are necessary for employment, formal assistance in obtaining jobs may not be the key to employment. Other factors (such as age, ability, and experience) may be more likely factors in gaining employment.

LIVING SITUATIONS

In the year preceding their confinement in a correctional institution, more than 80 percent of respondents had been living in a parental home. Of these respondents, one-fourth had also lived in non-parental foster or group homes (other than detention facilities) in the year preceding their institutionalization. Placement in these homes generally reflects the fact that students

have experienced difficulties with their families to such an extent that a decision has been made by some agent of the criminal justice system to find alternative placements for the student. Living arrangements experienced by students upon release appeared to be similar to pre-institutional experiences, with the exception of a slightly higher frequency of placements in foster or group homes.

About three-fourths of respondents returned to the city they had lived in prior to their confinement. Of those who did not return to the same location, over one-half were sent to a new location by their parole officer or aftercare worker so that the respondent could participate in a community-based rehabilitation program or live in a group home setting. This parole practice supports recent findings that programs described as "community-based" are in reality only programs located in urban cities, and that these programs are generally not based in communities from which students originate (Silberman, 1978).

About 40 percent of the respondents reported that they were having problems with their present living situation. Most problems centered on conflicts with parents. The lack of privacy in both group home settings and large family units was also frequently cited as a problem.

Pre-release assistance in adjusting to the living situation was made available to nearly 40 percent of respondents. The remaining respondents reported that there was no need for such assistance as they were returning to parental homes.

POST-RELEASE OFFENSE VIOLATIONS

In investigating post-release experiences of students, an outcome that is frequently of concern to most audiences is the extent to which students released from institutions are involved with subsequent law violations and behaviors that could result in their reinstitutionalization. The ultimate question generally is that if confinement in correctional institutions is designed to alter certain behaviors, how successful has the institutional treatment been in meeting this goal? The discussion of rates of further involvement with the law, and the characteristics of recidivists and situations encountered that are correlates of recidivism are the subject of this section.

Official records of violations of the law have until relatively recently been the primary basis for distinguishing offenders from non-offenders or recidivists from non-recidivists. Frequent objections to the use of official statistics focus on the question of their reliability (Gibbs and Erickson, 1975; Doleschal, 1970). For the post-release offense data reported for the sample of interviewed respondents, reports of recidivism for this study were obtained by the now conventional alternative to official reports; namely, respondents provided self-reports of offense behavior and offense descriptions. For the larger sample of students not interviewed, reports of offense data were obtained from parole officers and mainly reflect official arrest records.

Recidivism rates obtained by self-reporting methods and those based on parole officer reports differed substantially. In contrast to the finding of previous follow-up studies, where the frequency of contacts with criminal justice authorities obtained from personal interviews were found to be substantially underreported (Mallar and Thornton, 1978; Witte, 1975), in this study it was found that self-reported rates of recidivism were higher for the interviewed sample of releasees. Two possible explanations are that the rates of recidivism reported in previous studies and in our parole reports reflect official arrests, or reflect recidivism rates of those released only on parole, both rates of which may have been underestimated. This difference in recidivism rates obtained is discussed in more detail in later paragraphs.

Past studies have utilized several methods for measuring recidivism, including arrest rates, conviction rates, or incarceration rates. Recidivism rates are further complicated and made noncomparable by the inclusion or exclusion of noncriminal offenses (e.g., status offenses); by basing rates on numbers of offenses committed at times and on numbers of offenders committing them at other times; and by the reporting of offense rates after different lengths of released time. The predominant use of self-reported measures of "further involvement with the law" (rather than conviction rates, arrest rates, etc.) for analyses contained in this report is based on the assumption that such measures are least likely to be contaminated by other factors that arise during the process of adjudication and the determination of guilt, where essentially legal

rather than behavioral standards are used in the determination of offense commission. The influence of plea-bargaining, judge and jury prejudices, and legal representation can be expected to confound the designation of offenders as recidivists or nonrecidivists and thus obscure relationships. Whether recidivist behavior meets the generally stiff legal definition of guilt is generally not an issue for investigations focusing on reported behavior rather than on legal accountability.

Within the three-to-seven month period of release, 40 percent of interviewed releasees reported having further involvements with the law (see Table V-4). The rate reported by parole officers was a significantly lower 28 percent. Calculating recidivism rates using the alternative method of number of offenses revealed a 72 percent rate of further offense commission for interviewees, and a 48 percent rate for parole-reported releasees. Given the short length of time following release, the rates, especially among interviewees, are quite high.

The discrepancy of recidivism rates between self-reported and parole officer-reported offenses is largely explained by the dispositional outcomes of offenses. Students interviewed reported with higher frequency "further involvements" that were subsequently officially dismissed. These involvements could easily escape the attention of parole officers, since they require no formal reaction. As is demonstrated in Table V-4, an estimate of offender recidivists rates (removing charges dismissed) within a three-to-six-month follow-up period then is between 20 and 30 percent. The remaining discrepancy between rates is explained by the higher rate of offense commission for those released without parole supervision (who are included in the interviewed sample but are not included in the parole-reported sample).

In the assessment of post-institutional adjustment in terms of recidivism rates, the categories of recidivists who are purely status offenders or parole violators is problematic, especially given the frequency of such recidivists. These recidivists have committed no criminal offense. For status offenders, it is difficult

Table V-4. Recidivism Rates, Distribution of Offense Types, and Offense Dispositions

	Students Interviewed	N	Parole Reports	N
Offender Rates (Offenders Per Group)	40%	(175)	28%	(432)
Removing "charges dismissed"	30		20	
Removing noncriminal offenses	33		18	
Offense Rates (Offenses Per Group)	72		48	
Removing "charges dismissed"	50		38	
Offenses Committed Per Offender:				
1 Offense	57		86	
2 Offenses	30		14	
3 Offenses	13			
	(70 offenders)		(119 offenders)	
Classification of Offenders by "Most Serious Offense":				
Parole Violator	1%		16%	
Status Offender	16		18	
Drug/Disorderly Conduct	13		6	
Property Offender	47		48	
Person Offender	23		12	
	(70)		(119)	
Distribution of Offenses:				
Parole Violation	21%		19%	
Status Offenses	19		16	
Drug/Disorderly Conduct	0		8	
Property Offense	44		47	
Person Offense	16		10	
	(126 offenses)		(208 offenses)	
Dispositional Outcomes:				
No Formal Charges	17%		18%	
Arrested, Charge Dismissed	13		4	
Arrested, Detained	14		9	
Arrested, Released	14		9	
Adjudicated, Continued Probation/Parole	19		32	
Adjudicated, Institutionalized	20		26	
Other	3		3	
	(109)*		(112)*	
Reinstitutionalization Rates				
% of Sample Housed in State Institutions	13%	(175)	7%	(432)
% of Sample Housed in Local Detention Facilities	5	(175)	5	(432)
% of Offenders Housed in State Institutions	31	(70)	28	(103)
% of Offenders Housed in Local Detention Facilities	13	(70)	10	(103)
Classification of Reinstitutionalized Offender by "Most Serious Offense":				
Parole Violator	22%			
Status Offender	16			
Drug/Disorderly Conduct	0			
Property Offender	44			
Person Offender	19			
	(22)			
Distribution of Reinstitutionalized Offenses:				
Parole Violation	11			
Status Offenses	28			
Drug/Disorderly Conduct	2			
Property Offenses	46			
Person Offenses	11			
	(46 offenses)			
Reasons Cited for Reinstitutionalization:				
Problems with Living Situation	28			
Drug, Alcohol, Emotional Problems	28			
Bad Peer Influence	19			
Motivational Problems	11			
No Support from Parole Officer	7			
Not Guilty	7			
	(43)			

*Due to cases where one disposition was made for several offenses committed, the number of dispositions does not equal the number of offenses committed.

to assess whether the behavior bringing them in contact with law enforcement agencies is unhealthy, regardless of its definition as non-conforming. A similar argument can be made for parole violations. Special conditions are attached to parolees, such as requirements to obtain permission before moving geographically or changing jobs, or the requirement to participate in special treatment programs. Parole officers generally have a great deal of discretion in formulating specific conditions of parole and in revoking parole for violations. Since such violations are essentially noncriminal, and since the enforcement of the observation of these conditions varies among parole areas and among parole officers, these violations may overestimate post-release failures due to releasees' undesirable behavior. To obtain a perhaps better assessment of the extent of post-release failure, recidivism rates were calculated eliminating non-criminal offenses. A recidivism rate of 33 percent for interviewees and 18 percent for those reported by parole officers was obtained.

The classification of respondents by offender types presented a problem similar to the classification of recidivists and non-recidivists discussed above. Many classification schemes have previously been employed to explore the relationship of offender status to various outcome measures (Gibbons, 1965; Sykes, 1958; Irwin, 1975). Offender classifications based on legal definitions of crime are generally easy to obtain but are predictive or explanatory of little, probably because they are classified on legalistic rather than on theoretical or behavioral principles. On the other hand, offender classifications based on psychiatric or psychological evaluations of institutional residents are both difficult to obtain and also predictive of little. Both Toch (1975) and Cohen et al. (1976) failed to find a relationship between the classification of residents on any of a number of measures (including maturity, aggressiveness, introversion of extroversion), and subsequent behaviors or attitudes.

Given the extent of multiple offenses and the fact that releasees' subsequent offenses were not necessarily the same as were previous violations, the classification of recidivists by offense type is rendered difficult (i.e., status

offenders are almost as likely to commit property offenses as status offenses on subsequent law violations). Thus a classification scheme based on the "most serious offense" committed was employed. This scheme was useful since the distribution of offenses for multiple offenders revealed that less serious and essentially noncriminal offenses such as status offenses and parole violations were either the only offense committed or were likely to be combined with more serious property-related offenses (e.g., burglary, larceny, forgery) or person-related offenses (e.g., robbery, assault and battery). This classification scheme revealed almost half of the offenders in both samples to be engaged in property-related crimes (see Table V-4). Approximately 30 percent of the interviewed recidivists' (and 40 percent of the parole-reported recidivists') most serious offense consisted of violations that are legally noncriminal in nature if such offenses were to have been committed by an adult (e.g., status offenses) or by a person with no institutional history (e.g., parole violations); or consisted of violations for which a great deal of variation exists in whether or not arrests are made given the extent of such behavior among society members as a whole (e.g., possession of marijuana, drunkeness, and disorderly conduct). As might be expected given the fact that all reports received from parole officers reported a much higher rate of parole violations as the most serious offense than did interviewed students (16 percent versus 1 percent), and the fact that about 3[illegible] percent of students interviewed were not on probation or parole, the more seriously-regarded person-related crimes were more characteristic of the interviewed respondents, but were not generally characteristic of recidivists on the whole.

Past studies of recidivism as a measure of post-release outcome have focused on its relationship to the background characteristics of respondents, personality characteristics, and situational factors in the post-release experiences of releasees (including post-release service delivery and the impact of institutional factors such as victimization or institutional treatment received). All three categories of variables were investigated in this study for their relationship to recidivism. The issue investigated concerns what factors or combination

of factors interact to predict recidivism, and what types of intervention or post-release services seem to be related to non-recidivism?

Background characteristics examined included age, ethnicity, grade placement, level of basic skills performance, offender status, and extent of previous experiences in correctional settings. Personality measures included self-esteem, locus of control, and perceptions of post-release success or stigmatization. Situational factors included post-release experiences in terms of school entry, employment, pre- and post-institutional living arrangements, and pre- and post-release assistance in adjusting to non-institutional life.

After examining these background characteristics, personality measures and situational factors, only the age of the respondent, respondent's feelings of control, and pre-institutional placement in non-parental homes significantly discriminated recidivists from non-recidivists in both samples.* Other significant relationships reported in Table V-5 disappeared when age was controlled, and were thus only related to recidivism because of their relationship to respondent age.

The discrimination obtained was surprising given previous failures to discriminate recidivists on the basis of personality constructs (Kassebaum, 1971; Lipton et al., 1975) or situational impact (Miller and Dinitz, 1973). However, the relationship of age to criminality and recidivism, where it has been found that the younger the respondent, the more likely he or she is to recidivate, has been previously documented (Cressey and McDermott, 1975).

Non-recidivist respondents had reported significantly higher feelings of control than did their recidivist counterparts. The directionality of this difference between groups was demonstrated in the pre-release locus of control

*The weak relationship between recidivism and level of basic skills performance was not demonstrated among interviewed respondents.

Table V-5. Pearson Correlations of Recidivism Outcomes with Student Background Characteristics, Level of Achievement, Student Attitudes, and Time Since Release

	RECIDIVISM (1=Yes; 0=No)		REINSTITUTIONALIZATION (1=Yes; 0=No)	
	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports	Students Interviewed	Parole Reports
Age	-.24 (171) S=.001	-.08 (342) S=.05	-.08 (171) n.s.	-.08 (342) n.s.
Ethnicity*	-.11 (167) n.s.	-.0. (341) n.s.	-.15 (167) S=.05	.06 (341) n.s.
Sex**	**	-.02 (347) n.s.	**	.06 (347) S=.01
Offense For Which Institutionalized (Least to Most Serious)	-.11 (161) n.s.	-.04 (300) n.s.	.06 (104) n.s.	.10 (300) S<.05
Length of Time Institutionalized	.07 (70) n.s.	.05 (253) n.s.	.36 (70) S=.001	.05 (253) n.s.
Level of Math Achievement	-.06 (127) n.s.	-.15 (430) S=.001	-.13 (174) S=.05	-.15 (430) S=.001
Level of Reading Achievement	.00 (127) n.s.	-.08 (358) n.s.	-.07 (140) n.s.	-.08 (358) S=.06
Liking of School	.03 (114) n.s.	-.09 (333) S<.05	.06 (114) n.s.	-.06 (333) n.s.
Self-Esteem	-.13 (174) S=.05	-.04 (317) n.s.	-.07 (174) n.s.	-.04 (317) n.s.
Locus of Control	-.22 (173) S=.001	-.14 (313) S=.01	-.13 (173) S=.05	-.05 (313) n.s.
Length of Time Since Release	.16 (170) S=.01	.05 (314) n.s.	-.002 (170) n.s.	.02 (314) n.s.

*Ethnicity was scored "1" for non-minority respondents, "2" for minority respondents.

**Females were scored "1", males were scored "2". Too few females were represented in the interviewed sample to report.

scores for both samples, and in the post-release locus of control scores for interviewed students, although the correlation was rot as great using pre-release measures of control. That post-release measures of locus of control are more closely related to offense behavior than are pre-release measures is to be expected, given the demonstrated impact of situational events on personality measures (Mischel, 1968). Nonetheless, that the relationship is maintained upon release indicates that there are cross-situational consistencies in an individual's perceptions of control that are predictive of recidivist behavior.*

Recidivists and non-recidivists differed in terms of their living situations prior to institutionalization. Those who subsequently proved to be recidivists reported higher frequencies of living in non-parental homes (e.g., foster homes, group homes) than did non-recidivists. Placements in non-parental homes are generally made when parent-child relationships are highly conflictual and when running away from home becomes the child's solution to the problem. The highly structured environment of the group home was viewed negatively by respondents in this study; further status offenses such as runaways, or engagement in criminal activity with other residents, was often the result.

REINSTITUTIONALIZATION

Reinstitutionalization rates (computed as the percentage of releasees returned to state or local institutions) were expected to be higher for students interviewed solely on the basis of their higher rate of offense commission. However, students interviewed were found to be reinstitutionalized at a 13 percent rate, and those reported on by parole officers were reinstitutionalized at a similar rate of 9 percent. Since rates of reinstitutionalization and recidivism are difficult to compare with previous follow-up studies, given the varying time periods over which such studies are conducted, it is difficult to compare the rates obtained in this study with previous research. Previous follow-up studies,

* The Pearson correlation of the institutional measure of locus of control with the post-release measure was .45.

however, can provide a bench mark according to which these three-month rates can be evaluated. Miller and Dinitz (1973) found a 40 percent rate of reinstitutionalization after a two-year follow-up period, and Glaser (1969) found a 33 percent rate after five years.

Reinstitutionalization rates computed for the eight institutions did not substantiate previous findings that rates were significantly higher for youth institutions than they were for adult institutions. Computing a rate of reinstitutionalization based on the recidivist groups alone revealed rates to be similar among both groups. Thirty-one percent of student recidivists interviewed and 28 percent of students reported on by parole officers were incarcerated in state institutions. Thus, about one of every three recidivists was reinstitutionalized.

For the most part defining "recidivists" in terms of those who had been reinstitutionalized obscured the relationships found between recidivists (using a "commission of offense" classification) and non-recidivists. Reinstitutionalized students did not differ significantly from their non-institutionalized counterparts in terms of school entry, job success, living arrangements, ethnicity, grade placement, level of self-esteem, feelings of control, or attitudes toward school and learning. Reinstitutionalized students differed from other recidivists only with respect to age: younger recidivists are less likely to be reinstitutionalized. Rather, the official response to the further violations of younger releasees is to continue them on probation or to attempt some form of community-based treatment.

It was expected that the reinstitutionalized group would differ from the recidivist group merely because a longer release time and the often times lengthy adjudication process ultimately resulted in confinement. This expectation was not substantiated. Although releasees who committed further offenses had been released for a longer period of time than non-recidivist releasees, the length of release time was not related to whether these recidivists were then reinstitutionalized by the time of the interview. Instead, the decision to reinstitutionalize repeat offenders appears to be primarily a function of the offender's age.

Over one-half of those reinstitutionalized reported that reasons for their failure in the community centered on drug problems, alcohol abuse problems, or problems with their living situation. The finding that those reporting personal difficulties are likely to be reinstitutionalized is consistent with previous conclusions that the likelihood of institutionalization is greatly influenced by the judges' knowledge that such problems exist (Silberman, 1978).

Whether or not a releasee was reinstitutionalized was related to the size of the community to which he was released: reinstitutionalized students were more likely to have been released to larger communities than their non-institutionalized counterparts (a gamma correlation of .29, significant at the .01 level was obtained). Whether or not a respondent was released on parole demonstrated no relationship to reinstitutionalization.

The relationships previously demonstrated between offense recidivism and age, feelings of control, and non-parental living situations were not maintained among the reinstitutionalized group. The interpretation of the absence of this relationship is that factors relating to age, feelings of control, and unfavorable living situations are instrumental in predicting whether a releasee engages in further illegal activities; such factors, however, do not influence whether a recidivist is committed to an institution.

The most serious offenses committed by 30 percent of those reinstitutionalized were status offenses or parole violations. This finding is not consistent with recent conclusions that since the 1971 U.S. Supreme Court decision in Morrissey versus Brewer (where it was decided that parole could only be revoked for new criminal violations and not for technical violations), parolees are rarely returned to prison for any offense less than a new crime (McCleary, 1978). Thus, seriousness of offense committed was not related to reinstitutionalization, nor was length of time since release. It is likely that the extent of prior criminality or personal problems, the offender's age, the presence or absence of legal representation, and judicial decision-making are more likely to have an impact on reinstitutionalization rates.

The receipt of pre- or post-release services in terms of school entry or employment assistance was not related to recidivism or reinstitutionalization. Although reinstitutionalized respondents did not differ from recidivists or other releasees in their frequency of receipt of services, they differed significantly in their desire for such services. One-third of reinstitutionalized students who received no services reported they wanted post-release assistance but never received it (as compared to 10 percent of non-institutionalized recidivists); most reported that they didn't know who to contact to receive needed assistance. The apparent conclusion is that releasees who do not receive needed assistance are more likely to engage in illegal activities upon their release for which they are reinstitutionalized. However, since interviews were conducted after the fact of reinstitutionalization, it is possible that the frequency of reports of frustrated desires for post-release services are little more than retrospective rationalizations of post-release failures.

RELEASE ON PAROLE VS. DIRECT RELEASE

Sixty-five percent of students interviewed had been released on parole, generally for a one-year period of time. The remaining respondents constituted a group of direct releases from the institution, for whom there was no provision for supervision. Respondents released on parole were similar to direct releases on all dimensions except the length of time they were institutionalized. Parolees spent an average of six months whereas non-parolees spent an average of eight months in institutions.

Respondents were asked to provide descriptions of their parole experiences following their release from institutions. These reports characterizéd parole supervision (in terms of frequency of interaction) as minimal: 40 percent of parolees interacted with their parole officers less frequently than once a month; another 30 percent interacted only once a month. Student reports of frequency of contact were comparable to the findings of the National Assessment of Juvenile Corrections. In that study of a national sample of juvenile

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courts, probation officers were found to contact their probationers an average of one and one-half times a month. For all respondents from two institutions in the present study, interaction was only in the form of letter writing: a progress report was written and submitted to the parole officer each month.

Over one-half of the parolees reported that their parole officers were of no help to them whatsoever. Most parolees who had helpful relationships with their parole officers felt that the emotional support they received from parole officers was the most helpful aspect. Only 16 percent of parolees reported that they received any tangible form of assistance in terms of job placement, family counseling, or referrals to other community agencies. In responding to ways in which parole officers could be of more assistance to them, over half of parolees wanted no interactions whatsoever; 20 percent felt parole officers should provide job-finding assistance; and 20 percent didn't know of any ways in which they could have been more supportive.

Since most follow-up studies only track residents released on parole, expectations of the relative recidivist rates for parolees and those released directly to the community are unknown. It has on one hand been argued that previous overall recidivist rates have been underestimated since measures on the recidivist behavior of directly released inmates have not been obtained (Lipton et al., 1975). On the other hand, an argument can be made that due to the close supervision of parolees and the possibility that recidivist rates of parolees reflect a large proportion of technical parole violations, recidivist rates would be higher among parolees. Of those interviewed, students released directly to the community were more likely to recidivate than were those released on parole. Fifty percent of direct releases and 36 percent of parolees committed offenses after their release from correctional institutions.

Parole supervision was investigated for its relationship to school entry and employment success. Both paroled and non-paroled respondents entered school

upon release at the same rate, and subsequently dropped out of school at the same rate. Non-paroled students did not experience more difficulty in entering school in terms of a time lapse between release from the institution and school entry. Parolees in general did not perceive their school performance more favorably than did non-parolees. Almost all students intended to return to school, regardless of their paroled or unsupervised status.

Of those students not returning to school, both paroled and non-paroled respondents attempted unsuccessfully to enter school with the same frequency. Directly released students were significantly different from their paroled counterparts in their more frequent reports of desires to attend school (although they didn't act on these desires). Although parolees were more likely to obtain employment than were direct releasees, it is difficult to determine whether these are relatively independent measures. As discussed in an earlier section, employment is often a condition of parole.

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG MEASURES OF POST-RELEASE ADJUSTMENT

It is often theorized that the failure of releasees to enter school after release, or to obtain jobs, often results in further contact with law enforcement agencies. Whether or not students entered school bore no relationship to the commission of offenses. Student recidivists reported no greater frequencies of unsuccessful attempts to enter schools, or nonrealized desires to attend school, upon their release than did non-recidivists. Similarly there was no consistent relationship between perceived school performance or the experiencing of school difficulties and recidivism. Both recidivists and non-recidivists reported intentions of returning to school at an 80 percent level of frequency, and both groups reported similar achievement expectations.

Although school attendance was not related to whether or not a releasee got into trouble after release, there does appear to be a relationship between school attendance and whether or not a recidivist is reinstitutionalized (see Table V-3).

This relationship, however, is explained by age: younger recidivists are less likely to be reinstitutionalized, regardless of school attendance.

The demonstrated relationship of school entry to job success was as expected: releasees who entered school were less likely to have obtained jobs. This relationship was maintained when age was controlled among students interviewed, and probably reflects the fact that school attendance and obtaining a job are somewhat mutually exclusive choices.*

Success in obtaining jobs proved to be related to recidivism, but only for those reported by parole officers. Those who obtained jobs upon release were less likely to recidivate. Since respondent age was related to both job success and recidivism, the influence of age was controlled and revealed that age had no influence on the relationship between employment success and recidivism within the parole-reported sample.

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*While the significant relationship between school entry and employment was in the same direction for both the parole-reported sample and the sample of students interviewed, the magnitude of the relationship obtained was stronger among students interviewed. Controlling for age among the parole-reported sample revealed a slightly stronger relationship of -.19, significant at the .01 level. However, this coefficient was still smaller than was the case for students interviewed.

CHAPTER VI. WHAT SERVICES EXIST TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF RELEASED STUDENTS?

The impact of the provision and receipt of pre- and post-release services on the post-release adjustment of those released from correctional institutions has been the subject of a number of previous investigations and continues to be of great concern to policy-makers. The rationale for the provision of pre-release, liaison, or post-release services to released offenders is that these services should facilitate transition into suitable living situations, schools, or employment, and should reduce the likelihood of negative behaviors such as recidivism. Evidence of the impact of assistance programs on various outcome measures has demonstrated mixed results. Mallar and Thornton (1978) found that of a sample of men released from prison who had a high probability of committing theft crimes, the treatment group receiving financial assistance had significantly fewer arrests for theft crimes than did the control group. However, services such as job placement have been found to have no favorable effect on post-release recidivist behavior. Men who received job placement assistance were found to be more likely to recidivate than those who did not (Mallar and Thornton, 1978; Glaser, 1969). In still other studies of releasees from state institutions, the releasees' personal resources have been shown to be inadequate and public assistance unavailable (Horowitz, 1976; Lenihan, 1975).

The present study sought to investigate whether the personal needs of releasees in terms of school transitional and entry assistance, employment assistance, assistance in finding suitable living arrangements, and counseling support for emotional adjustments, were being met by state correctional institutions, by parole agencies, or by community support agencies. In previous sections, the frequency with which such pre-release and post-release services were received by students released from correctional institutions was described from a student perspective. This frequency is interesting in and of itself since it provides an estimate of the extent to which services are received by a population of students released from institutions at any one point in time. However, this estimate does not necessarily provide an accurate picture of the extent to which correctional institutions or community agencies make or encourage programmatic attempts to provide services. The larger numbers of stu-

dents from sites with a shorter length of confinement and rapid turnover could contribute disproportionately to estimates of the extent of current service delivery when student responses alone are reported. In this section then, pre- and post-release service delivery will be investigated from the institutional perspective (utilizing institutional averages in the reporting of data from the eight follow-up sites for some computations, and using institutional reports from the 40 Phase II sites for other computations), and from the perspective of interviewed community agency personnel. The perspectives of these two types of respondents as well as the perspectives of students regarding service needs are then discussed in a following section.

INSTITUTIONAL REPORTS OF PRE-RELEASE SERVICE DELIVERY

Regardless of the desirability of program service delivery from a humanistic perspective alone, correctional administrators disclaimed the implied association between institutional program services or treatment and releasees' subsequent success in a community. Many factors may interact with institutional treatment while students are confined, or after their release, to impact on post-release success (Kwaitler, 1977). Nonetheless, the need for pre-release services has been recognized in a small proportion of institutions and has manifested itself in the development of specially-designed pre-release programs to facilitate the transition of released offenders to non-institutional living. About one-fifth of the 40 Phase II institutions identified pre-release planning as a special program objective.

The rationale presented for the development of such pre-release programs is that while institutional treatment may effect change within individuals while they are confined, release to the community presents residents with a myriad of problems that are non-existent within the confines of the institution. These pre-release programs pursue objectives such as the development of job-finding skills, the setting of long-term and short-term career objectives, the identification of methods for controlling drug and alcohol-related problems, the development of social skills, and the setting of expectations for post-release difficulties in terms of psychological adjustment (e.g., the impact of moving from a highly structured to a relatively unstructured setting; the need for self-discipline).

Despite the development of such integrated approaches to releasee assistance among a few institutions (where the entire institutional program is designed to be an integrated approach to release rather than to confinement), correctional institutions as a whole do not offer much in the way of systematically administered pre-release services. One reason for relatively few pre-release activities is the often distant location of institutions from communities, and the lack of communication with community service agencies. The combination of physical distance, the unknown identity of community agencies, and the large number of communities to which students return has--at least in the past--prevented the development of a systematic and integrated post-release service delivery system.

Although this appears to be an appropriate explanation for the infrequency of provided assistance, it is not often the reason provided by institutional personnel. Among many institutions, but particularly among adult institutions, the attitude was pervasive that "once they leave here, they are on their own." Individual motivation, not programmatic efforts, was believed to be the predominant source of post-release success.* Almost one-half of institutions participating in the Phase II impact evaluation reported that they provided pre-release assistance, but only upon the request of residents for assistance (see Table VI-1). Another one-third of the 40 institutions reported that they either offered no assistance, or assisted only a very few. Thus, the provision

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*Although this attitude appears to indicate that institutions fail to take responsibility for effecting desired outcomes, it may well be a realistic observation. Recognizing the poor basic skills of students, their emotional problems and home problems, and the fact that such persons are not likely candidates for school success or for finding employment in a highly competitive job market, institutional staff often feel helpless in influencing students' lives given the short length of student confinement and an institution's lack of control over community responses to released students. In such situations it is reasonable, though not necessarily desirable, to conclude that only the motivated releasee--who perseveres despite innumerable obstacles--will adjust in the community.

Table VI-1. Reports of Pre- and Post-Release Services by Site and Type of Assistance

Student Reports:

Site	% Students receiving pre-release services from all sources		% Students receiving pre-release services from all sources		
	School Liaison	Job Assistance	School Liaison	Job Assistance	(N)
1	13	13	50	50	(8)
2	10	2	34	53	(90)
3	28	39	22	50	(18)
4	33	40	46	66	(15)
5	83	17	42	25	(12)
6	57	29	15	43	(14)
7	25	25	0	17	(12)
8	20	40	0	100	(5)
$\bar{X}$ Site	34	26	26	51	

Institutional Reports of Pre-Release Assistance:

	% of Institutions
No assistance	16
Assistance for only a few	16
Assistance for some (on request of student)	44
Assistance for all	24
	(38 institutions)

of pre-release or transitional services among 60 percent of the institutions is either lacking entirely or is contingent upon the individual motivation of a population that has been described as highly unmotivated.

From an analysis of student reports of pre-release preparation for adjusting to the community at the eight follow-up sites, it can be estimated that on the average, 38 percent of releasees receive services with the less-than-systematic approach to service delivery offered by institutions. Pre-release assistance for three-fourths of those who received it consisted of a therapy session where psychological counselors informed those about to be released of the difficulties they were to expect on the outside. For only nine of the 175 students were the families of releasees included in pre-release counseling. Many institutional staff members felt that it was currently impossible to provide for the release needs of students given the way release decisions are made. In many institutions decisions to release individual students are made by a team of persons such as caseworkers, correctional officers, parole boards, and custody or cottage staff--often not including educational staff. The complaint was registered by teachers and educational administrators that they received little, if any, advance notice of impending departures.

COMMUNITY AGENCY AND STUDENT REPORTS OF POST-RELEASE SERVICE DELIVERY

Less than one-half of respondents had any contact with a counselor after their release, and using an estimate based on the average site-level percentage of students receiving services, one obtains an estimate of less than 33 percent. This latter estimate removes the extreme influences of a particular state that has an extensive system of helping agencies, and another state where no such agencies exist: neither of these situations seems to be characteristic of states or communities on the whole.

Contact with the community counselor was reported by students to have been made within one week after release for one-half of those receiving such assistance. Sixty percent of those who were in contact with counselors had been sent to them by their parole officers; less than 20 percent of those receiving ser-

vices were contacted by the agency providing services. In the remaining situations, students themselves initiated the contact (but generally only for job counseling services), or parents of the student initiated contact (generally for the student's emotional, alcohol, or drug problems). Counselors were seen an average of once a week.

Most of the students receiving services cited the helpfulness of the counselor's emotional supportiveness, and the fact that they had someone to talk to, as the most positive aspects of counseling. Fewer than ten respondents who received counseling felt that the counseling was not helpful. Fifteen percent of those who did not receive counseling services (mostly direct releases) actually wanted and perceived a need for such services. The type of services requested were related to employment and vocational training for 50 percent of respondents, and psychological services for another 50 percent. Those not having received post-release counseling services and not desiring them felt they had no need (71 percent), that counselors in general are of no help (15 percent), and that the releasees were reluctant to discuss personal problems with others. Despite a general reluctance to admit a need for assistance for oneself, 30 percent of respondents reported that most students released would need emotional support and someone to talk to in order to relieve anxiety upon their release.

Types of Community Agencies Serving Needs of Released Students

Post-release services offered by community agencies ranged from narrowly focused programs working on only one aspect of adjustment problems (e.g., drug addiction) to comprehensive therapeutic community programs designed to service every need of released offenders (e.g., housing, employment, schooling, psychological counseling, financial assistance).

Helping agencies most frequently serving released offenders were classified as one of three types: (1) agencies serving the job assistance needs or vocational rehabilitation of offenders; (2) neighborhood clinics generally operating as offshoots of mental health centers; and (3) programs serving special needs of clients, such as drug, alcohol, or substance abuse centers. Other

helping agencies identified were primarily regional developments. For example, one state had a well-developed network of group homes; in two states alternative schools having the same goals as public schools but recognizing the skill deficiencies and motivational difficulties of released students were operative; another state utilized volunteer programs (e.g., "Big Brothers"); and in still other states the recreational program approach was used by several agencies to reach those ex-offenders with adjustment problems, and who were not likely to seek the assistance of a community agency.

In three of the six states where students were tracked, parole services appeared to be the major source of available assistance. These parole agencies expanded their activities beyond a purely supervisory role. They were operating job-assistance programs, work-release programs, vocational rehabilitation departments, group homes, and crisis intervention centers. In still another state, a network of community-based treatment centers had more or less taken over the supervisory and treatment roles of parole officers. In these situations, the parole agency served primarily as an administrative and legal agency, assigning releasees to various treatment centers.

CHAPTER VII. WHAT PROBLEMS AND NEEDS STILL EXIST AND WHAT SERVICES COULD BE PROVIDED?

Based on the observations of institutional staff, representatives of community agencies, parole officers, and released students, combined with the empirical findings of this follow-up study, salient needs and special targets of concern were identified, forming the topic of this section.

PERSISTENT PROBLEMS

In spite of current failures to provide pre-release and transitional services to meet student needs, most institutional staff were aware of the problems students face in making the transition to non-institutional life, particularly with respect to school-related failures. Institutional staff at all sites were extremely consistent in their identification of the following problems:

- The emotional needs and basic skills deficiencies of institutional students require a highly individualized form of attention that is not provided by public schools.
- The interruption of schooling when students enter and are released from institutions at mid-term makes it difficult, if not impossible, for them to successfully re-enter regular community schools.
- The fact that correctional educational standards for course requirements are frequently not accepted by public schools presents programming difficulties for students when they transfer to public schools.
- Self-discipline problems and motivational problems of students often result in poor school attendance after their release.
- The fact that public schools have not identified student deficiencies and have not developed realistic expectations for students with special needs in terms of factors such as required courseload is thought to prevent released students from entering and succeeding in schools. While students were perceived as needing 'structure' because of their own lack of self-discipline, the structure imposed

in public schools was thought to be unhelpful for released students. For example, although a full courseload supplies a great deal of structure, students with deficiencies in basic skills cannot realistically be expected to perform well if overburdened.

- The reluctance of schools to admit students who have a history of school-related problems and the stigmatization of students with institutional records was thought to present problems for school entry, although this anticipated problem was not substantiated by released students themselves.

- The competitive nature of acceptance into the highly-desired vocational or trade schools, and the inability of institutionalized students to compete for these positions leaves students with few alternatives after their release.

Many of these problems are not easily remedied. Others could be remedied, but by sources other than federal programs. For example, the problems posed by the unacceptability of institutional coursework are matters for which state educational agencies must provide a solution. The extent of this problem was documented in the Phase II impact evaluation, where it was reported that almost one-third of the randomly selected sites reported that they had no state accredited educational programs (Keesling et al., 1979). More than ten states have attempted to remedy this problem by the creation of 'correctional education' as a separate school district under the jurisdiction of the state educational agency rather than the state correctional agency.*

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*Although the problem of non-overlapping credits between correctional education and public school education may be solved by such organizational changes, caution must be used in embracing changes on a single basis alone. For example, arguments by some who are opposed to such reorganization center on the complaint that public school administrators do not develop curricula to meet the needs of the released student, or other students with similar needs. Rather, correctional education courses have been forced to take on the content and skill level of public education courses in order to obtain accreditation. Correctional educators argue that such courses have already demonstrated their unresponsiveness to the individual needs of institutionalized students.

Solutions to the problems of transferring to schools or other transitional problems depend to a large extent on the type of institution in which residents are housed. Students residing in urban facilities are more easily served, since the community to which they are returned may be at hand, and the community helping agencies could be known by institutional personnel. In such situations, responsibility for providing transitional services may best lie within the institution itself, since the staff will have identified the needs of students during confinement and may be the best-informed sources for planning and coordinating release activities.

Among institutions physically isolated from communities and from which students return to many communities, the solution is more difficult. Knowledge of community agencies that provide needed services are as yet unknown to institutional staff. This difficulty is compounded by the fact that a certain amount of knowledge of a student's special needs and the rapport established with the student may be lost whenever another person is introduced. Regardless of these difficulties, some institutional staff felt that a formal job should be established on site to coordinate the assistance needed by released offenders.

Other solutions offered by institutional staff were more far-reaching in their objectives. Among shorter-term institutions in particular, an essentially release-oriented correctional philosophy prevailed. The goal of these institutions from the day of a student's entry to the day of his departure focused on preparation for the return to the community. Such institutions focused on the development of basic skills, survival skills, social relations and career planning, almost to the exclusion of an emphasis on facility work or adherence to a strict disciplinary schedule. The objective of these release-oriented institutions was to identify those needs of institutionalized students that hindered their effective functioning in the community, and to provide access to the means for remedying these deficiencies. For example, such pre-release programs focus on the development of job-seeking skills rather than on obtaining employment for residents upon their release.

Community agency respondents also presented problems that impeded their effectiveness in meeting released offenders' needs. Service-oriented bureaucracies were described as bogged down in red tape, inter-agency competition for funds was reported and piecemeal service delivery was the admitted outcome. Administrators in one state, for example, pointed out that releasees may be certified to receive services, but their parents may not be certified. Thus, interactive family therapy cannot be conducted. Competition for funds and the need to provide positive program evaluations has been said to result in the practice where "...most service agencies disallow the provision of services to the more difficult clients--the ones who fill correctional institutions and require extensive, integrated services". In many situations, the extent to which community agencies were serving released offenders' needs was impossible to determine from the community agency perspective because releasees from correctional institutions were not always readily distinguishable among clients, and because little inter-agency communication existed. Nonetheless, almost all service agency respondents called for major reorganization of the service delivery system to replace the present piecemeal intervention.

Administrators of community programs reported that a major problem of post-release service delivery is that those persons in frequent contact with released students (e.g., parole officers) have little training to do the massive job expected of them. They further argued that the passive role assumed by correctional institutions and parole agents, where releasees are instructed to be self-motivating and seek out assistance, is doomed to failure.

SERVICES THAT COULD BE PROVIDED

Despite the numerous problems that still exist, the follow-up study identified needs that could be addressed by the provision of pre-release, liaison, and post-release services:

- Pre-release planning, transitional service delivery, and post-release service delivery require a closer liaison between correctional institutions and the communities to which students are released. The

introduction of an institutional liaison agent could be a step toward recognizing the fact that in the long run institutional treatment can only be effective if it is combined with plans to meet the post-release needs of students.

- In order to be effective, this liaison agent must be a part of the institutional release decision-making process. Plans for release must be coordinated among educational staff, treatment staff and releasees.
- Institutional instruction should be coordinated with the school program from which the student was removed, or to which the student will return. Such planning will minimize the loss of credits if the student is planning to obtain a high school degree, or will insure that the objectives set in the institutional education program can be pursued in a non-institutional setting.
- Pre-release planning must include family members, since planning conducted without their cooperation may seriously impede the attainment of a student's post-release objectives.
- Liaison with schools should include providing community schools with knowledge about the specific learning needs of students. The determination of realistic educational objectives should be a joint decision made by the student, the institutional liaison, and a representative of the community school.
- Knowledge of the existence of community options must be obtained by the institutional liaison agent. For example, during the course of pre-release planning, students should be made aware of alternative schools (e.g., G.E.D. preparatory classes, adult basic education, work-study programs) that often take into consideration the advanced age, low basic skill level, and difficulties with public schools that these students frequently encounter.

- School-related objectives should take into account the work interests these students express. Since obtaining a job is desired by most students, setting educational objectives that allow for the simultaneous pursuit of a degree or a G.E.D., and part-time work, could be an effective strategy.
- Knowledge of job-finding skills was desired by many students. Such survival skills should be taught as part of pre-release planning, or should be taught by a community agency.
- Better coordination between institutional staff and community members (employers, for instance) is necessary so that work or school references can be provided.
- Releasees from correctional institutions are comprised of those released under the supervision of parole officers, and those released directly to communities. Since parole officers were found to be a major source of contact with community agencies, direct releases are lacking in the major source that establishes contacts for the receipt of services. Directly released students could be a specific target of concern. The fact that their recidivism rates were higher than was the case for paroled students and that they reported the unfulfilled need for post-release services significantly more often than did parolees support this suggestion.
- Other targets of concern should be the 75 percent of those failing to enter school after release who cited personal inabilities or situational constraints as reasons for non-attendance, as well as those who entered school after release but subsequently dropped out.

CONCLUSIONS

In this follow-up study of the post-release experiences of students released from correctional institutions, it has been found that students continue to experience problems in school, in obtaining desirable types of employment, in

finding favorable living situations, and in staying out of trouble. Only one-half of the students return to school, and 80 percent of those soon drop out. Others who do not enter school after release are often constrained in their choices by factors beyond their immediate control, e.g., their basic skills are not at a level that allows them to enter public schools at their expected grade level, and the increasingly competitive vocational/technical schools no longer generally admit students who do not have at least a General Equivalency Diploma.

Unfavorable post-release adjustments have often been attributed to poor student motivation alone. However, study findings support recent conclusions that institutions assume few responsibilities in assisting youths in their transition from correctional institutions to community living. Based on inputs from institutional staff, community agencies, and students themselves, one common thread that has emerged is the lack of coordination among correctional institutions, community institutions such as schools, and community service agencies in assisting releasees. The assessment of existing pre-release and post-release services revealed at least one major flaw with current service delivery: pre-release services and post-release services are rarely coordinated in a way that would allow for timely pursuit of objectives. Coordination between institutional programs and post-release agencies is sorely needed.

It appears that the key to successful post-release adjustment for released students is the setting of realistic goals, the provision of liaison and re-entry services of many types, and follow-up after students have spent some time in the community. The present state of pre-release decisions, where unrealistically high expectations based on individual motivation alone are taken as a positive sign of readiness for community functioning, is not counter-balanced by the reality of the situation when students are returned to the community. For example, few students, despite their motivation to continue in school, actually completed the school term they entered, and many obtained only jobs they disliked.

Since student problems in acquiring basic skills (a major objective of Title I funding), in obtaining G.E.D.s, or in accomplishing other favorable objectives are interactive, it may not be an effective strategy to define service delivery in terms of strictly educational objectives. For example, a drug-related or family problem may influence school attendance. The objective of a high school diploma cannot be realistically pursued when factors impeding the meeting of such objectives are ignored.

The use of federal funds to provide the liaison between institutional objectives--and the pursuit of these objectives on a community-level--was advocated by respondents in most institutions. While community agencies concurred with the immediate need for more coordination of efforts, they were less likely to advocate that responsibility for this service be vested in correctional institutions.

Although institutions could not provide for all the post-release needs of students, certain pre-release and liaison activities could be conducted by them. Because of their prolonged contact with students, institutional staff are often aware of the needs and problems of their students. Highly individualized instruction, for example, usually provides institutional teachers with a thorough understanding of a student's special learning problems and the type of teaching methods and personal interactions to which he responds. This knowledge is rarely, if ever, transmitted to the community schools that the student enters. The often cited problem that public schools fail to develop realistic expectations of releasees, or fail to provide for their learning needs, may be more a function of the lack of knowledge of student learning problems, rather than the unwillingness to seek a solution. At the very least, liaison services could provide such information to community schools, on the expectation that schools would respond to the information provided them.

Institutional staff, particularly those who have developed positive and supportive relationships with students, express a desire to provide follow-up services to students. The desirability of service delivery from institutional staff is based on their observations that valuable time is lost when a new agent, who is unknown to the respondent and who does not possess in-depth knowledge of the student, is introduced. Despite the desirability of the continuity of service delivery that institutions could provide, this solution is not practical where the geographic dispersion of releasees is wide. Although some pre-release services can still be provided in these situations, the liaison with communities to which students return is more problematic.

Another potential problem for pre-release and liaison service delivery that should be brought to the attention of policy-makers is the situation where institutional service delivery would be feasible, but not advisable. Institutions do exist, for instance, where few positive relationships between staff and residents are established and where, in fact, antagonistic relationships may be the norm. The continued interaction of institutional staff and residents in these situations may be counter-productive to desired outcomes, e.g., the building of motivation to continue in school. Based on the negative assessments of many respondents in this study, similar situations may occur with parole officers. First and foremost, any person performing a liaison service has to be an advocate of the student. Neither correctional institutions nor parole agencies, nor community agencies has a monopoly on such types of staff; thus, vesting this responsibility in any one of these agencies does not necessarily guarantee that the most appropriate pattern of service delivery has been pursued for particular sites.

In providing assistance to those released from correctional institutions, we must be aware of the findings of treatment personnel who are currently working with pre-releasees within institutional settings. The realization that underlies decisions to provide services is generally based on the recognition that

for some reason the target population is constrained from achieving favorable outcomes or demonstrating desired behaviors. The provision of services can perpetuate feelings on an individual level that recipients are victims rather than masters of their fate. The relationship between recidivism, job success and feelings of external control demonstrated by respondents in the present study testifies to the importance of perceptions of control in determining behaviors and ultimately surviving in the community. Thus, post-release or liaison services that are provided should be in keeping with treatment modalities employed in many correctional institutions that recognize the need for residents to participate in their own rehabilitation. Specifically, goals set for the released offender in terms of post-release success should be realistic (e.g., taking recognition of factors such as the releasee's advanced age, low-level of basic skills performance, emotional problems, home environment, achievement expectations, vocational needs, physical disabilities, or language barriers) and should be based on the releasee's own expectations and goals rather than be imposed on him/her. Service delivery should be cognizant of the existing motivations of releasees (e.g., desires or frustrated attempts to enter schools, desires for employment, the need for counseling services to deal with conflictual living situations) and provide opportunities for overcoming fatalistic expectations of never being able to achieve objectives such as acquiring a G.E.D., entering vocational/technical schools, and ultimately obtaining desirable types of employment.

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APPENDIX

Table A-1. Comparisons of Samples on Background Characteristics and Attitudinal Measures (Mean Values, Standard Deviations and Percentage Distributions)*

	Phase II Sample of Total Population		Parole Officer Reports on Releasees		Students Interviewed	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Age	17.2 (1168)	2.8	16.5 (342)	2.5	17.0 (172)	1.9
Ethnicity:						
Black	40%		33%		18%	
Other Minority	17%		17%		15%	
White	43%		50%		66%	
	(1188)		(348)		(130)	
Sex:						
Female	13%		21%		2%	
Male	87%		79%		98%	
	(2247)		(347)		(174)	
Last Grade Attended	9.2 (1190)	2.3	9.4 (344)	5.0	9.4 (135)	1.4
Educational Program:						
Title I Participant	69%		73%		83%	
Regular Education Only	31%		27%		17%	
	(1353)		(361)		(144)	
Institutional Offense Status:						
Status Offenses	16%		20%		13%	
Drug Offenses	7%		7%		10%	
Property Offense	49%		52%		63%	
Person Offenses	28%		21%		14%	
	(1127)		(300)		(104)	
Months Spent in Institution (at time of Phase II testing)	6.1 (1219)	6.7	5.7 (286)	4.7	4.5 (83)	3.4
Months Left in Institution**	8.4 (1130)	13.8	3.2 (320)	5.8	1.0 (173)	2.1
Math Achievement - Proportion Correct on Domain Referenced Test	.66 (1039)	.18	.68 (268)	.17	.74 (67)	.15
Reading Achievement - Proportion Correct on Domain Referenced Test	.66 (1134)	.25	.69 (297)	.24	.71 (77)	.23

*Background characteristics and attitudinal measures reported in this table were obtained from students during Phase II testing at the institutions.

**During Phase II data collection, students were asked to estimate how much longer they would be in the institution. The figures for parole officer reports and students interviewed are estimates made by the student during Phase II data collection.

Table A-1 (Cont'd)

	Phase II Sample of Total Population		Parole Officer Reports on Releasees		Students Interviewed	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Institutional Attitudes:*						
Liking of School	2.7 (1124)	1.70	2.7 (333)	1.60	2.4 (114)	1.60
School Involvement	2.3 (1146)	1.00	2.3 (384)	.93	2.1 (113)	.99
Practical Orientation of Learning	3.2 (1097)	1.20	3.2 (324)	1.20	3.2 (112)	1.30
Teacher Support	4.9 (1089)	2.00	5.2 (315)	1.80	5.1 (111)	1.80
Attitudes Toward Reading	2.3 (1149)	.90	2.2 (340)	.92	2.0 (112)	1.00
Attitudes Toward Math	1.9 (1152)	1.10	1.9 (340)	1.10	1.5 (114)	1.20
Peer Affiliation	2.2 (1104)	.90	2.3 (321)	.87	2.6 (110)	.72
Self-Attitudes:*						
Self-esteem	6.1 (1072)	1.40	6.2 (313)	1.4	6.4 (108)	1.30
Locus of Control	7.8 (1043)	3.00	8.0 (313)	3.00	8.3 (106)	2.60
Sociability	3.3 (1067)	1.10	3.4 (318)	.96	3.5 (102)	.91

*For a complete description of attitudinal scales, refer to the Phase II report, Volume II of Compensatory Education and Confined Youth.